

**DISCUSSION DRAFT, H.R. \_\_\_\_\_,  
“NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
CENTENNIAL ACT”**

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**LEGISLATIVE HEARING**

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL LANDS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

Wednesday, December 2, 2015

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**LEGISLATIVE HEARING ON DISCUSSION  
DRAFT, H.R. \_\_\_\_, TO PREPARE THE  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE FOR ITS CENTEN-  
NIAL IN 2016 AND FOR A SECOND CENTURY  
OF PROMOTING AND PROTECTING THE  
NATURAL, HISTORIC, AND CULTURAL  
RESOURCES OF OUR NATIONAL PARKS FOR  
THE ENJOYMENT OF PRESENT AND  
FUTURE GENERATIONS, AND FOR OTHER  
PURPOSES, "NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
CENTENNIAL ACT"**

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**Wednesday, December 2, 2015  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Subcommittee on Federal Lands  
Committee on Natural Resources  
Washington, DC**

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The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:00 a.m., in room 1324, Longworth House Office Building, Hon. Tom McClintock [Chairman of the Subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives McClintock, Gohmert, Lummis, Westerman, Hice, Hardy, LaHood, Bishop; Tsongas, Beyer, Huffman, Lowenthal, Dingell, Capps, and Grijalva.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. The hour of 10:00 having arrived, the Federal Lands Subcommittee will come to order. The subcommittee meets today to hear testimony on a discussion draft of the "National Park Service Centennial Act." We will begin with 5-minute opening statements by the Chairman of the Subcommittee, the Ranking Member, the Chairman of the Full Committee, and the Ranking Member of the Full Committee, if he would like to join us.

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. TOM MCCLINTOCK, A REPRESENTA-  
TIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Next year marks the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. This year-long celebration of the national parks affords us a unique opportunity to reflect on the past, assess the present, and make adjustments for the future.

The Centennial pays tribute to the uniquely American notion that our most beautiful and historic lands should be set aside for the use and enjoyment of the people of the United States. In the words of the Organic Act of 1916, "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same. . ."

Yet, as we approach the Centennial, the Park Service faces considerable challenges to achieving the goals set forth in the Organic

Act, chief among them being a massive \$11.5 billion deferred maintenance backlog. As the Park Service has gradually taken on new responsibilities, and Congress has voted to add new units to the system, the Park Service has fallen behind on necessary projects. With 409 units now included in the system, the Park Service is spread thin.

In addition to deferred maintenance projects, the Park Service also faces challenges with fee collection, technological upgrades, management of concessions contracts for visitor services, and, most disturbingly, a decrease in overnight stays at our parks. We have been told that visitation is at an all-time high, but this is an illusion created by new memorials in Washington, DC. In fact, per capita visitation to our parks has steadily declined since the peaks of the late 1980s and early 1990s.

From their all-time highs, in-park concessioner lodging is down by 722,000 persons annually, or about 17 percent. Tent campers are down by about 1.37 million overnights, about 26 percent. The decline in visitation has been particularly high among young people. In fact, most ominously, recent reports indicate that visits to parks by those 15 and younger fell by 50 percent in the last decade.

Meanwhile, RV camper overnight stays are down by 2.6 million camper nights, about 56 percent, despite the fact that RV ownership and RV stays at private campgrounds has grown dramatically.

This subcommittee is especially concerned over policies that are actively removing traditional tourist amenities from our national parks.

Two years ago, the National Park Service proposed removing long-standing tourist facilities from Yosemite Valley, including bicycle and raft rentals, snack facilities, gift shops, horseback riding rentals, the iconic ice skating rink at Curry Village, the art center, the grocery store, swimming pools, and even the Valley's landmark and historic stone bridges.

Their current plan locks in a 30 percent reduction in campsites and lodging, compared to historic highs, including loss of prime sites close to the river. Funds appropriated by Congress to restore campsite levels after the 1997 flood were not spent as Congress instructed.

I cannot think of a better way to approach the next century of our National Park Service than to restore the vision of its founders. Our national parks should be open to the public for all recreational pursuits: hiking, biking, fishing, snowmobiling, horseback riding, skiing, rafting, skating, RVing, camping, or staying in a historic lodge. These are the priceless memories our parks are there to create for succeeding generations of Americans.

The discussion draft before the subcommittee today helps the Park Service to prepare for its nationwide celebration in 2016, as well as better equipping the Service for the next century of promoting and protecting our parks. Provisions in the bill help reduce the Service's deferred maintenance backlog by creating new sources of revenue to pay for needed improvements. Other provisions will help the Service expand its Volunteers-In-Parks and Public Land Corps programs, as well as making needed changes to the National Park Foundation Board of Directors.

Our witnesses today have come to share their views on how to best prepare the Park Service for its Centennial, and how we can improve park management and visitation. I thank each of them for their willingness to testify before this subcommittee today, and for their dedication to ensuring that our national parks are on a path toward greater sustainability.

[The prepared statement of Mr. McClintock follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HON. TOM MCCLINTOCK, CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE  
ON FEDERAL LANDS

Today, the Federal Lands Subcommittee meets to hear testimony on a discussion draft of the National Park Service Centennial Act.

Next year marks the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. This year-long celebration of our National Parks affords us a unique opportunity to reflect on the past, assess the present, and make adjustments for the future.

The Centennial pays tribute to the uniquely American notion that our most beautiful and historic lands should be set aside for the use and enjoyment of the people of the United States. In the words of the Organic Act of 1916, “*to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same.*”

Yet, as we approach the Centennial, the Park Service faces considerable challenges to achieving the goals sets forth in the Organic Act, chief among them being the massive 11.5 billion dollar deferred maintenance backlog. As the Park Service has gradually taken on new responsibilities and Congress has voted to add new units to the system, the Park Service has fallen behind on necessary projects. With 409 units now included in the system, the Park Service is spread thin.

In addition to deferred maintenance projects, the Park Service also faces challenges with fee collection, technological upgrades, management of concessions contracts for visitor services, and most disturbingly, a decrease in overnight stays at our parks. We have been told that visitation is at an all-time high, but this is an illusion created by new memorials in Washington, DC. In fact, per capita visitation to our parks has steadily declined since the peaks of the late 1980s and early 1990s.

From their all-time highs, in-park concessioner lodging is down by 722,000 persons annually, or about 17 percent. Tent campers are down by 1.37 million overnights, about 26 percent. The decline in visitation has been particularly high among young people.

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its Volunteers-in-Parks and Public Lands Corps programs, as well as making needed changes to the National Park Foundation Board of Directors.

Our witnesses today have come to share their views on how to best prepare the Park Service for its Centennial, and how we can improve park management and visitation. I thank each of them for their willingness to testify before this subcommittee today and for their dedication to ensuring that our national parks are on a path toward greater sustainability.

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Mr. McCLINTOCK. And, with that, I recognize the Ranking Member for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. NIKI TSONGAS, A REPRESENTATIVE  
IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS**

Ms. TSONGAS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As we prepare for next year's centennial anniversary of the National Park Service, I am reminded of something Stephen Mather, that agency's very first director, once said. Reflecting on the new agency, he remarked that, "The parks do not belong to one state or to one section. . . . The Yosemite, the Yellowstone, the Grand Canyon are national properties in which every citizen has a vested interest; they belong as much to the man"—and I would add, woman—"of Massachusetts, of Michigan, of Florida, as they do to the people of California, of Wyoming, and of Arizona."

These words are a powerful reminder in this era of political division and disagreement: national parks cut across party lines and geographic boundaries; they enjoy bipartisan support; and they bring people together, something we seem to need now, more than ever, to celebrate in our Nation's great traditions, history, and natural legacy.

For almost 100 years, generation after generation of Americans have made the commitment that our most significant historical, cultural, and natural sites should be preserved in perpetuity for future generations. Our national parks have been famously called "America's best idea," and have become ingrained in our national identity—places like the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Ellis Island, and, in my own district, Minute Man National Historical Park, which commemorates the "shot heard 'round the world," and the very beginnings of our country. These parks protect, celebrate, and give access to the many places that have shaped and defined who we are, as a people and a country; and it is important to remember that these places would not have been protected, absent support from the Federal Government.

And investments in our parks make economic sense. Nationally, the parks generate nearly \$30 billion in economic activity, and support 250,000 private sector jobs. When people visit our national parks, they also support nearby restaurants, hotels, and local outfitters and guides, and bring attention to the unique attributes of a hosting community. According to a recent economic study conducted by the National Park Service, every Federal dollar invested in our parks contributes \$10 in economic activity.

Despite its significant and multi-faceted contributions, however, the Park Service budget has been shrinking. In just the past 10 years, the Park Service has had its budget decreased by 22 percent, compromising its ability to ensure the long-term protection of our



treasured national heritage. This dramatic reduction in funding has occurred, despite widespread support for Federal investment in the National Park Service. In fact, a recent poll commissioned by the National Parks Conservation Association found that 9 in 10 Americans—Republicans, Democrats, and Independents—support sustained funding for national parks.

The discussion draft we are considering today could be an important first step to commemorate the 2016 Centennial. Many of the provisions in the bill before us today have bipartisan support, and were also included in H.R. 3556, also called the “National Park Service Centennial Act,” which was introduced by Ranking Member Grijalva.

For example, the draft legislation makes a commitment to the Centennial Challenge, a matching grant program that leverages Federal dollars to encourage private investments to support signature centennial projects identified by the National Park Service. The draft legislation also establishes an endowment at the National Park Foundation to support the missions and goals of the Park Service, and makes improvements to the Volunteers-In-Parks program.

While I am thankful to be discussing this draft legislation, I fear that it is an exercise in wishful thinking. I agree with the Majority that we must address the maintenance backlog in order to enhance visitor experiences and preserve our parks for the next generation. But making a dent in the maintenance backlog is going to require significant investment, and this legislation does not authorize any new Federal dollars for our national parks in their centennial year. New revenue generated by fees will not solve this problem.

H.R. 3556, introduced by Ranking Member Grijalva, provides \$300 million for a new Second Century Infrastructure Investment Fund to address critical maintenance backlog needs. It also provides \$100 million to establish the Public Land Centennial Investment Program, a competitive fund open to our four land management agencies for top-priority visitor services, outdoor recreation, land and water restoration, and energy efficiency projects.

Mr. Grijalva’s legislation also fully funds the Centennial Challenge at \$100 million, maximizing our opportunity to generate private matching funds. And it authorizes these new programs only through 2018, demonstrating a clear commitment to projects that can have an immediate impact on our parks, and quickly address some of the deferred maintenance backlog.

Next year, all eyes will be on our national parks and the expected influx of visitors. I look forward to working with my colleagues to reach a bipartisan compromise on the two proposals for the “National Park Service Centennial Act.”

With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Tsongas follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HON. NIKI TSONGAS, RANKING MEMBER,  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL LANDS

As we prepare for next year’s Centennial Anniversary of the National Park Service, I’m reminded of something Stephen Mather, that agency’s very first director, once said. Reflecting on the new agency, he remarked that “the parks do not belong to one state or to one section . . . The Yosemite, the Yellowstone, the Grand

Canyon are national properties in which every citizen has a vested interest; they belong as much to the man (and I would add, women) of Massachusetts, of Michigan, of Florida, as they do to the people of California, of Wyoming, and of Arizona.”

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For almost 100 years, generation after generation of Americans have made the commitment that our most significant historical, cultural, and natural sites should be preserved in perpetuity for future generations. Our national parks have been famously called “American’s best idea” and have become ingrained in our national identity—places like the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Ellis Island, and in my own District, Minute Man National Historical Park, which commemorates the shot heard ‘round the world’ and the very beginnings of our country. These parks protect, celebrate, and give access to the many places that have shaped and defined who we are, as a people and a country, and it is important to remember that these places would not have been protected, absent support from the Federal Government.

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Despite its significant and multi-faceted contributions, however, the Park Service budget has been shrinking. In just the past 10 years, the Park Service has had its budget decreased by 22 percent, compromising its ability to ensure the long-term protection of our treasured national heritage. This dramatic reduction in funding has occurred, despite widespread support for Federal investment in the National Park Service. In fact, a recent poll commissioned by the National Parks Conservation Association found that 9 in 10 Americans—Republicans and Democrats—support sustained funding for national parks.

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Next year, all eyes will be on our national parks and the expected influx of visitors. I look forward to working with my colleagues to reach a bipartisan compromise on the two proposals for the National Park Service Centennial Act.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Great, thank you. I am now pleased to recognize the Chairman of the Natural Resources Committee—

Mr. BISHOP. The Ranking Member first?

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. You want to go? OK. At the Chairman's request, we will go to the Ranking Member, Mr. Grijalva, for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ARIZONA**

Mr. GRIJALVA. Thank you, Chairman, and thank you, Chairman Bishop.

Let me associate myself with the Ranking Member's comments, essentially the comments that I intended to make and will not repeat. In Chairman Bishop's proposed draft that we are going to be discussing today, there are two glaring issues. One of the glaring omissions is the fact that we are not dealing with the issue of funding and resources.

Given the fact that the Park Service has lost 16 percent of its funding over the last 10 years, which is a self-fulfilling prophecy, it has added to the backlog of deferred maintenance in the Park System. It has added to the reduction of staff, and has hurt our outreach efforts and our ability to enhance the experience by having qualified staff at our parks to be able to work with the public and lead them through the experience, as we know it.

So, there are all these contributing factors—the backlog, visitorship drop, and rewriting the concessionaire relationship between the Park Service, essentially taking the Park Service out of the equation in terms of what is appropriate in any given unit. I think these factors are all part of a draft discussion that merits much more work, and also an opportunity, as Ms. Tsongas said, to work on something bipartisan.

It has to be an investment. The legislation that the Administration and the agency sent over became H.R. 3556, and essentially talks about a \$900 million investment. Ms. Tsongas outlined some of the critical areas there. But, the glaring omission of no funding, no resources, and the self-fulfilling prophecy that we continue to cut at the agency and then blame the agency for backlogs, for not being able to respond to changing times and needs, and for not having the ability to attract more visitorship. This is not the way to walk into celebrating 100 years of our National Park System.

I would suggest that, as we go forward, the omission of funding and looking closely at what those cuts have done to the Park Service is a good use of our time; and I look forward to working with the Chairman and the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee, and the Chairman of the Full Committee, on possible areas in which there can be some agreement and some compromise.

But, essential to celebrating the Centennial is also America's investment in its parks, a legacy that is 100 years old. Many of us, although we will not be around, would like to see that celebrated another 100 years from now, with the proper direction and the proper investment on the part of Congress.

With that, I yield back, and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Grijalva follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA, A REPRESENTATIVE IN  
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ARIZONA

Next year marks the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service and Congress has the responsibility to invest in our national parks, ensuring that they will endure another century and continue to represent the diverse voices and communities that make up our great country. That's why I decided to introduce the Administration's version of the National Park Service Centennial Act when they sent it to Congress. After 100 years of safeguarding our most treasured places—from Grand Canyon and Saguaro National Parks in my home state of Arizona to Lowell and Minute Man National Historical Parks in Ranking Member Tsongas' district—it seemed only appropriate to work with and introduce the agency's proposal.

My bill, H.R. 3556, is very similar to the discussion draft shared by Chairman Bishop, except for one main difference: my bill invests \$900 million over the next 3 years. The Chairman's bill does not include any new Federal spending.

Over the past 10 years, the budget for the National Park Service has decreased by nearly 16 percent. This has led to a growing maintenance backlog of over \$11 billion. If we don't begin to rectify this funding shortfall, the backlog will only continue to grow. House Republicans like to complain that the Park Service and other Federal land management agencies are unable to take care of the assets under their management and use this as an excuse to rake agency decisionmaking procedures and personnel over the coals. The reality is that starving agencies like the National Park Service of the resources they need to manage our shared public heritage is a self-fulfilling prophecy. Of course there is an ever-expanding backlog of maintenance and infrastructure needs: Congress refuses to appropriate enough money.

Forced austerity is not the answer. The investments we make in our public lands are multiplied many times over. In the case of national parks, every dollar invested generates \$10 dollars in economic activity. Gateway communities around the country and the \$600 billion outdoor recreation economy rely on Federal investments to enhance national economic output.

Next year's National Park Service Centennial Celebration provides us with an excellent opportunity to right the ship and inject much needed investment into our national parks. The National Park Service Centennial Act could be the perfect vehicle. Unfortunately, the discussion draft falls short. Despite all of the rhetoric about the need to address the maintenance backlog, funding for infrastructure and construction needs is neglected by the discussion draft. It's my understanding that Park Service requires upwards of \$800 million per year just to maintain the status quo and prevent the backlog from growing. This bill does not provide anything.

My bill authorizes \$300 million over the next 3 years for the Second Century Infrastructure Fund to address maintenance needs. If we are going to do something for the Centennial, we should do something that affirms our long-term commitment to national parks. My bill also provides the Centennial Challenge with \$100 million per year for the next 3 years.

The Centennial Challenge, a program first established under President George W. Bush, leverages Federal dollars with matching private donations to fund signature projects across the National Park System. Last year, Congress provided \$10 million for the Centennial Challenge which was matched by \$15 million in private donations. As we'll hear from today's witnesses, this successful program is essential to the support provided by Friends groups all over the country.

While I recognize that this program is included in the discussion draft, it's important that we provide it with consistent, sustained funding. Private donors are more willing to participate if they know Congress is willing to offer matching funds. Like with all funding for the national parks, there needs to be a long-term commitment.

I thank the Chairman for putting forward this proposal and I look forward to working together to find a compromise.

Let's not wait until some future anniversary to make sure our national parks have the funding they need. We owe it to the next generation of Americans to get it right now.

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Mr. McCLINTOCK. Thank you.

The Chair now recognizes the Chairman of the Natural Resources Committee, Congressman Rob Bishop, for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. ROB BISHOP, A REPRESENTATIVE  
IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF UTAH**

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the opportunity, I appreciate our witnesses being here, and look forward to your testimony very significantly.

I must disagree with the Ranking Member on just one point: the parks are not America's greatest idea—baseball is. The parks are just nice.

[Laughter.]

Mr. BISHOP. Parks are nice. But 100 years ago, we created the Park Service. There were only 35 units then. Today, there are 409, about 84 million acres are covered; and you do have a maintenance backlog of about \$12 billion.

So, we obviously have to look forward to what is going on, and how we move forward into the next 100 years. The Park Service, I admit, is spread thin. Congress is somewhat to blame for that. Not necessarily in what we are doing, but we keep adding units to the Park Service without new funding mechanisms. It is fun and sexy to add a new unit to the Park Service. It is not fun or sexy to talk about fixing a sewer system. Yet that is exactly what we need to do with this centennial.

So, we can authorize anything we want to, that does not mean it is going to be appropriated. In this era of offsets that must be found for anything which we develop, an era where there are cut-go and pay-go programs identified by both parties, which may be an accounting technique, but it is still necessary and what we have to go through, it is time for us to be realistic about where we can go to move forward, and to realize that what we have to do is do something differently than what we have done in the past.

That is why I am looking forward to coming up with new tools and new sources of revenue that can be used by the Park Service going into the next 100 years. I am looking forward to working with Mr. Grijalva to come up with what will, hopefully, be a bipartisan approach, which is why this is a discussion draft, which means, quite frankly, we are open to suggestions.

But, I think what we need to do is make sure that the status quo is not acceptable, and we need to come up with new mechanisms, new approaches, and emphasis on that in a realistic pattern of what can be accomplished and where we can actually accomplish something, as we move forward for the next 100 years.

With that, I look forward to the testimony and the questions that may be given, and I yield back.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Now we will hear from our witnesses. I think you are all veterans of this committee—5 minutes for your oral statements, the complete statement will be printed in the record. We have some helpful colored lights to keep you on track, with the yellow light indicating you have 1 minute remaining, and the red light—it means, for heaven's sakes, stop.

[Laughter.]

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. With that, I am very pleased to welcome back to the committee the Director of the National Park Service, Jonathan Jarvis, for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF JONATHAN B. JARVIS, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL  
PARK SERVICE, WASHINGTON, DC**

Mr. JARVIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to discuss the “National Park Service Centennial Act” with you today.

In 2016, the National Park Service will celebrate 100 years as the steward of the Nation’s most cherished natural and cultural resources. We are actively preparing for our second century, and working hard to connect with, create, and enhance the experience for the next generation of park visitors, supporters, and advocates.

Earlier this year, in partnership with the National Park Foundation, we launched a campaign to encourage the next generation to experience the national parks; and we are already seeing those results. In 2014, we experienced record visitation with over 292 million visitors, and we are on track to exceed that number this year. These visits do more than provide inspirational, educational, and recreational opportunities. In 2014, they drove \$29.75 billion in economic impact, and supported hundreds of thousands of jobs around the country.

Another component of our Centennial effort is legislation to establish, clarify, or expand a number of key existing authorities to allow us to better serve the American people. Today, the subcommittee is considering a discussion draft bill, the “National Park Service Centennial Act.” This draft is comprised of elements of the Administration’s legislative proposal of the same title, which was transmitted by Secretary Jewell on August 31, and was subsequently introduced by Representative Grijalva as H.R. 3556.

We appreciate the committee’s interest in acting on the Centennial legislation, and we look forward to working with you. The Department will provide views specifically on the draft legislation of today’s hearing after the bill’s introduction.

The Administration’s proposed Centennial Act will provide new sources of funding and strengthen our ability to manage and operate the national parks and programs into the future. The proposal has 10 titles.

Title I, the Centennial Declaration, would recognize that we have responsibilities not only for administering the units of the National Park System, but also for programs to provide financial and technical assistance to states, communities, and individuals to protect our Nation’s heritage.

Title II would establish the National Park Centennial Fund, consisting of a mandatory appropriation of \$100 million for 3 years to be able to use as a match for signature partnership projects.

Title III would provide a mandatory appropriation of \$300 million for 3 years to correct maintenance backlog deficiencies.

Title IV would establish a Centennial Land Management Investment Fund consisting of a mandatory appropriation of \$100 million for 3 years to provide funding for a multi-agency competitive program.

Title V would direct the National Park Foundation to establish a Second Century Endowment for projects and activities that further the mission of the Service. And, of course, the discussion draft bill includes the similar provision.

Title VI would establish a National Park Service Centennial Second Century Fund in the Treasury funded through lodging fees, and from purchases of senior passes for citizens 62 years or older. The discussion draft also has a similar provision.

Title VII would provide clear authority for the interpretation and education work by consolidating authorities. It would raise the age limit for the Public Land Corps, extend the period for hiring members of the PLC, and would remove the \$3.5 million authorization ceiling for the Volunteers-In-Parks program. And, of course, the discussion draft has similar provisions.

Title VIII would establish a new Visitor Services Management Authority to award and manage contracts for the operation of commercial services.

Title IX would authorize agreements for the creation of reproductions of museum objects.

And Title X would redesignate the Secretary of the Interior and the Director of the Park Service as ex officio members of the National Park Foundation Board, and authorize an appropriation of \$25 million for 10 years. The discussion draft also has these provisions.

We greatly appreciate the committee's leadership on this issue, and your work on the discussion draft. We look forward to working with you on this effort, as it will assist the National Park Service in achieving its mission as we enter our second century of service.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my statement. I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Jarvis follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JONATHAN B. JARVIS, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE,  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the National Park Service Centennial Act.

In 2016, the NPS will celebrate 100 years as the steward of the Nation's most cherished natural and cultural resources. As outlined in our Centennial Plan, *A Call to Action*, the NPS is actively preparing for its second century of operations, and working hard to connect with and create the next generation of park visitors, supporters, and advocates. Earlier this year, the NPS, in partnership with the National Park Foundation, launched a campaign to engage the next generation and new audiences in the life-enhancing and sometimes life-changing experiences at national parks. Our efforts will draw new visitors, especially Millennials and young families, to experience the national parks. We experienced a record year in 2014 with over 292 million visitors and are on track to exceed that number in 2015. These visits do more than provide inspirational, educational and recreational opportunities; in 2014, they drove \$29.75 billion<sup>1</sup> in economic impact, supporting hundreds of thousands of jobs in communities around the country. We are also working with the National Park Foundation to leverage the interest of major corporate partners in engaging with this once in a lifetime anniversary.

As we look ahead to the next century, another component of our Centennial effort is legislation to establish, clarify or expand a number of key existing NPS authorities to allow us to better serve the American people. Today the subcommittee is considering a discussion draft bill, The National Park Service Centennial Act. This draft legislation is comprised of elements of the Administration's legislative proposal of the same title, which was transmitted by Secretary Jewell on behalf of the Administration on August 31, 2015, and was subsequently introduced by Rep. Grijalva as H.R. 3556. We appreciate the subcommittee's interest in acting on Centennial legislation and we look forward to continued discussions with you. The Department will provide specific views on the legislation after the bill is introduced.

<sup>1</sup>"2014 National Park Visitor Spending Effects Report," National Park Service, accessed November 30, 2015, [http://www.nature.nps.gov/socialscience/docs/VSE2014\\_Final.pdf](http://www.nature.nps.gov/socialscience/docs/VSE2014_Final.pdf).

The Administration's proposed National Park Service Centennial Act would provide new sources of funding and strengthen the ability of the National Park Service to manage and operate the national parks and programs that provide so many important natural, cultural, and recreational benefits to the Nation. There are 10 titles included in the legislation.

Title I, the Centennial Declaration, would recognize that the NPS has responsibility not only for administering the units of the National Park System, but for programs that provide financial and technical assistance to states, communities, and individuals to protect our national heritage. Title I would also direct the Secretary of the Interior to utilize these financial and technical assistance programs to further the conservation and enjoyment of the natural and cultural heritage of the Nation for the benefit and inspiration of the public.

Titles II–IV would implement part of the President's Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 Budget request to Congress. Title II would establish a National Park Centennial Challenge Fund, consisting of a mandatory appropriation of up to \$100 million for FY 2016, FY 2017, and FY 2018 to be used as the Federal match for signature partnership projects that will help prepare the national parks for another century of conservation, preservation, and enjoyment.

Title III would provide a mandatory appropriation of \$300 million to the NPS Construction Account for FY 2016, FY 2017, and FY 2018, to correct deficiencies in NPS infrastructure and facilities. In addition to requested discretionary appropriations, funding from Titles II and III would be directed toward NPS' deferred maintenance backlog and would restore and maintain all high-priority non-transportation assets into good condition over 10 years, consistent with the FY 2016 Budget proposal.

Title IV would establish the Centennial Land Management Investment Fund, consisting of a mandatory appropriation equal to \$100 million for FY 2016, FY 2017, and FY 2018 to provide funding for the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture to jointly establish a competitive program available to the four Federal land management agencies for projects that enhance visitor services and outdoor recreational opportunities, restore lands and waters, repair facilities or trails, or increase energy and water efficiency.

Title V would direct the National Park Foundation to establish a special account known as the Second Century Endowment for the NPS, consisting of gifts or bequests provided for this purpose, for projects and activities that further the mission of the NPS.

Title VI would establish the NPS Second Century Fund in the Treasury, which would be funded through additional lodging and camping fees and additional funds collected from purchases of the lifetime pass for citizens 62 years of age or older.

Title VII would clarify or expand authorities for activities that the NPS are already conducting to allow us to better serve the American people. This includes providing clear authority for the interpretation and education work of the NPS by consolidating a number of disparate authorities currently used, and directing the Secretary to ensure that management of National Park System units and related areas is enhanced by the availability and utilization of a broad program of the highest quality interpretation and education. Title VII would also raise the age limit for participation in the Public Lands Corp from 25 to 30 and extend the direct-hire authority from 120 days to 2 years, consistent with Department of the Interior resource assistant direct-hire authority. And, this title would remove the \$3.5 million authorization ceiling for the Volunteers-In-Parks to accommodate the funding needed to support this growing program.

Title VIII would establish the NPS Visitor Services Management Authority (VMSA), and authorize the Secretary to establish a pilot program to allow the VMSA to award and manage contracts for the operation of commercial visitor services programs and activities.

Title IX would authorize the Secretary to enter into agreements for the creation of reproductions of a museum object in which the object and its intellectual property rights are under the control of the Secretary.

Title X would redesignate the Secretary of the Interior and the Director of the NPS as ex officio members of the NPF Board. It also would authorize appropriations of \$25 million for each of FY 2016 through FY 2026 to NPF that would be used to leverage additional non-Federal funds to support our national parks.

The provisions I have just outlined are the key components we believe are necessary to move the National Park Service into its second century.

We appreciate the opportunity to discuss these issues with you. We look forward to working with the Chairman and members of the subcommittee on this important legislative effort.



Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or the other members of the subcommittee may have.

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QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD TO JONATHAN B. JARVIS, DIRECTOR,  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, WASHINGTON, DC

**Questions Submitted by Chairman Tom McClintock**

*Question 1.* Could you please provide the committee with the National Park Service's justification for banning bottled water in certain national parks?

Answer. The National Park Service has not banned bottled water in national parks. NPS Policy Memorandum (PM) 11-03, Disposable Plastic Water Bottle Recycling and Reduction was published in December 2011. The policy has a four-pronged approach of encouraging water bottle recycling, reduction of disposable water bottle use, education regarding disposable waste bottles, and elimination of disposable water bottles sales within parks where appropriate.

The policy includes an option for individual parks to eliminate sales, on a park-by-park basis, following extensive review and approval by the regional director. As part of this review, parks are required to evaluate the economic impacts of eliminating disposable water bottle sales on park concessioners as well as potential public health impacts on park visitors. Parks must show that they can avoid or mitigate any negative impacts prior to the regional director approving the elimination of sales. The policy is intended to reduce the environmental and cost impacts of disposable water bottles on parks.

National parks spend significant amounts of money on the management of solid waste, including disposable plastic water bottles. Reduction of waste is a highly successful approach for the National Park Service, as it contributes to reducing the overall costs for parks to provide sanitary trash collection and disposal services, reducing our environmental footprint, and reducing the greenhouse gas emissions associated with trash collection and disposal.

Visitors to all national parks continue to have access to unlimited drinking water and carry bottled water in the containers of their choice, either refillable or disposable. Parks have also added water bottle refilling stations to make use of refillable water bottles more convenient, and will have available for purchase affordable, refillable water bottles that can be refilled at no cost.

*Question 2.* Please provide the committee information about how the \$900 million in 2010 was used. Why was this 35 percent increase in a single year's budget not reflected in the construction fund? Where did this money go?

Answer. The National Park Service (NPS) received \$750 million in supplemental, one-time American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding in FY 2009, as well as increases to its annual budget in FY 2009 and 2010.

With the funding received under ARRA, projects were selected, using merit-based criteria. The NPS selected projects that addressed high-priority restoration and preservation needs, addressed deferred maintenance, and enhanced critical facilities. This included a quantifiable improvement to the condition of NPS facilities and a reduction of over \$500 million in deferred maintenance. NPS ARRA projects also improved the energy efficiency of facilities and equipment, expanded the use of renewable energy in parks, and encouraged the participation of young adults in their national parks. The NPS completed over 780 projects at 260 park units in 48 states and the District of Columbia with ARRA funds. ARRA grants were also awarded to 20 historically black colleges and universities for 21 historic preservation projects within the parameters of the Historic Preservation Fund.

The increases to its annual budget in FY 2009 and 2010 supported a wide variety of NPS programs, including over \$14 million for LWCF State Conservation Grants, nearly \$9 million for grants from the Historic Preservation Fund to states and tribes, and \$3 million for grants to Japanese American Confinement Sites. The additional funding also included more than \$100 million in targeted park base increases to address high-priority needs at units across the National Park System, including \$3.3 million to support drug eradication efforts on park lands, \$11.9 million to enhance law enforcement and icon security provided by the United States Park Police, and over \$44 million to support maintenance and repair of facilities.

Between FY 2010 and FY 2015, the discretionary appropriations for NPS fell by \$138.6 million. Additionally, the NPS has either fully or partially absorbed its fixed costs in each fiscal year, reducing the operational flexibility and capacity of its parks and programs.

### Questions Submitted by Representative Cynthia M. Lummis

*Question 1.* Could you please provide the committee with a complete list of projects that the NPS was able to fund using the \$10 million from the Centennial Challenge Fund? How were each of those projects matched with outside funding?

Answer. See the following chart.

FY 2015 Centennial Challenge Projects  
Updated January 2016

State	Unit Name	Project Title	Federal Share <sup>1</sup>	Total Partner	Partner
ME	Acadia National Park	Restore Hiking Trails	\$30,000	\$30,000	Friends of Acadia
ME	Acadia National Park	Rehabilitate Deer Brook Trail	\$50,000	\$50,000	Friends of Acadia
ME	Acadia National Park	Restore Carriage Road Vistas	\$85,000	\$85,000	Friends of Acadia
MD	Antietam National Battlefield	Restore Otto House Landscape	\$10,000	\$10,000	Save Historic Antietam Foundation
MD	Antietam National Battlefield	Remove Nonhistoric Trees from Antietam National Cemetery	\$10,000	\$10,000	Western Maryland Interpretative Association
WI	Apostle Islands National Lakeshore	Raise Sunken Walks at Raspberry Light Station	\$3,499	\$3,500	National Parks of Lake Superior Foundation
TX	Big Bend National Park	Replace and Renovate Fossil Bone Exhibit	\$300,000	\$515,000	Friends Big Bend National Park
KY, TN	Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area	Improve Access and Protect Appaloosa Field for Special Youth Events	\$5,090	\$5,090	Knoxville Arabian Horse Club
KY, TN	Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area	Reconstruct Stream Crossing and Correct Park's Legislative Access Road to Protect Aquatic Species	\$10,048	\$10,048	Back Country Horsemen
FL	Biscayne National Park	Commemorate African American Conservation Hero	\$15,000	\$15,000	South Florida National Parks Trust, City of Homestead
FL	Biscayne National Park	Conservation and Recovery of the Endangered Schaus Swallowtail Butterfly	\$18,211	\$18,212	Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund
RI	Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park	Design and Develop a Junior Ranger Program	\$8,000	\$9,000	Blackstone, Inc.
NC, VA	Blue Ridge Parkway	Replace Amenities at Price Park Campground and Picnic Area	\$22,000	\$22,000	Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation
NC, VA	Blue Ridge Parkway	Rehabilitate Abbott Lake Trail for Accessibility	\$30,764	\$30,769	Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation
NC, VA	Blue Ridge Parkway	Repair and Restore Historic Polly Woods Ordinary	\$48,597	\$48,597	Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation
NC, VA	Blue Ridge Parkway	Rehabilitate Paved Walkways in Price Park Campground	\$56,368	\$61,067	Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation
NC, VA	Blue Ridge Parkway	Repair and Restore Historic Johnson Farm Structures	\$87,934	\$87,936	Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation
NC, VA	Blue Ridge Parkway	Rehabilitate Mt. Pisgah Amphitheater	\$107,001	\$107,001	Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation
AR	Buffalo National River	Develop Explorers for Health Program	\$23,512	\$25,000	Buffalo National River Partners
AR	Buffalo National River	Launch Toney Bend Environmental Education Center	\$30,000	\$30,000	Arkansas State University
MA	Cape Cod National Seashore	Engage Future Stewards: SCA Youth Work Crew to Correct Priority Trail Deficiencies at Cape Cod	\$20,000	\$20,000	Eastern National
MA	Cape Cod National Seashore	Paint and Repair the Captain Penniman House to Preserve its Historic Integrity	\$85,000	\$115,000	Friends of Cape Cod
DC, MD, WV	Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park	Implement School Based Programming at Great Falls, Maryland	\$74,999	\$75,000	C+O Canal Trust
DC, MD, WV	Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park	Replace the Mardsten Track Bridge	\$75,000	\$75,000	C+O Canal Trust
OH	Cuyahoga Valley National Park	Install East Rim Off Road Single Track Bike and Hike Trail	\$183,404	\$198,687	Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park
NJ, PA	Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area	Reconnect Native American Youth to the Delaware River Valley	\$22,146	\$22,146	The Conservation Fund, Pocono Environmental Education Center, Delaware Nation, Delaware Tribe, Stockbridge-Munsee Nation
WY	Devils Tower National Monument	Re-Purpose Climbing Kiosk To Visitor Contact Station	\$15,352	\$16,468	Devils Tower Natural History Association
FL	Dry Tortugas National Park	Assessment and Interpretation of sea turtle nesting and hatching at Index Beach	\$12,000	\$14,000	South Florida National Parks Trust
FL	Dry Tortugas National Park	Re-Establish Loggerhead Key Lighthouse Light	\$26,400	\$30,000	Florida Lighthouse Association
FL	Everglades National Park	Replace Shark Valley Canal Viewing Platform	\$8,823	\$9,196	Everglades Association
FL	Everglades National Park	Assess Florida Bay Benthic Habitat for Restoration	\$34,320	\$35,000	South Florida National Parks Trust
FL	Everglades National Park	Replace Aids to Navigation	\$50,960	\$50,960	Everglades Association, South Florida National Parks Trust, National Parks Conservation Association
FL	Everglades National Park	Provide In-Park Education Programs to Diverse Miami Youth	\$78,172	\$99,475	South Florida National Parks Trust, National Park Foundation
NY	Federal Hall National Memorial	Improve Signage and Temporary Exhibits	\$90,000	\$110,000	Eastern National

State	Unit Name	Project Title	Federal Share <sup>1</sup>	Total Partner	Partner
CO	Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument	Engage Teens Through Work and Recreation on Trail System	\$13,000	\$13,000	National Park Foundation
CO	Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument	Establish Interdisciplinary Youth Conservation Corps Crew	\$26,000	\$26,000	National Park Foundation
GA	Fort Pulaski National Monument	Complete Deferred Preservation Maintenance on Cockspur Island Lighthouse	\$25,000	\$25,000	Friends of Cockspur Lighthouse
NJ, NY	Gateway National Recreation Area	Enhance Habitat of the Gardens and Big John's Pond	\$300,000	\$300,000	The Nature Conservancy
DC, MD, VA	George Washington Memorial Parkway	Establish an Arlington House Garden Youth Internship	\$4,000	\$4,000	Save Historic Arlington House
PA	Gettysburg National Military Park	Rehabilitate Cemetery Ridge	\$600,000	\$700,000	Gettysburg Foundation
MT	Glacier National Park	Engage Youth Through the Rehabilitation of the Highline Trail	\$18,000	\$20,000	Glacier National Park Conservancy
MT	Glacier National Park	Reconstruct Historic Missing Double Helix Stairway at Many Glacier Hotel	\$121,650	\$121,650	Dorcy Estate
CA	Golden Gate National Recreation Area	Develop Mobile Interpretive Application	\$44,400	\$44,400	Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy
CA	Golden Gate National Recreation Area	Concrete Preservation Institute Youth Stewardship Program	\$100,000	\$100,000	Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy
NY	Governor's Island National Monument	Develop and Install Wayside Exhibits	\$30,000	\$30,000	Eastern National
AZ	Grand Canyon National Park	Rehabilitate Clear Creek trail	\$30,000	\$30,000	Grand Canyon Association
AZ	Grand Canyon National Park	Rehabilitate Wilderness trail	\$207,000	\$207,000	Grand Canyon Association
AZ	Grand Canyon National Park	Rehabilitate Greenway trail	\$285,000	\$285,000	Grand Canyon Association
WY	Grand Teton National Park	Continue Preservation Efforts at the Mormon Row Historic District	\$21,000	\$21,000	Grand Teton National Park Foundation
WY	Grand Teton National Park	Preserve the Iconic T.A. Moulton and Reed Moulton Barns in the Mormon Row Historic District	\$23,000	\$23,000	Grand Teton National Park Foundation
WY	Grand Teton National Park	Rehabilitate Historic CCC Retaining Wall and Trail	\$51,375	\$51,375	Grand Teton National Park Foundation
WY	Grand Teton National Park	Replace Hidden Falls and Inspiration Point Bridges on Jenny Lake Trail	\$52,354	\$52,354	Grand Teton National Park Foundation
NC, TN	Great Smoky Mountains National Park	Restore Historic Mills	\$14,040	\$21,400	Friends of Great Smoky Mountain National Park, Great Smoky Mountain Association
NC, TN	Great Smoky Mountains National Park	Engage and mentor youth in wildlife management using modern technology	\$26,460	\$96,744	Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Friends of Great Smoky Mountain National Park, Great Smoky Mountains Association, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Tallassee Fund, and Seven Islands Foundation
NC, TN	Great Smoky Mountains National Park	Protect Hemlock Forests	\$49,961	\$60,000	Friends of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Great Smoky Mountains Association, Tallassee Fund
NC, TN	Great Smoky Mountains National Park	Protect and Restore Waterways	\$50,406	\$106,833	Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, The Nature Conservancy
NC, TN	Great Smoky Mountains National Park	Create Work Opportunities for the Next Generation through Youth Partnerships	\$68,400	\$163,082	Friends of Great Smoky Mountain National Park
NC, TN	Great Smoky Mountains National Park	Restore Alum Cave Trail	\$75,000	\$156,480	Friends of Great Smoky Mountain National Park
NC	Guilford Courthouse National Military Park	Rehabilitate Interpretive Media at Colonial Heritage Center	\$239,379	\$239,379	Guilford Battleground Company
HI	Hawaii Volcanoes National Park	Engage Youths and Partners to Protect Species and Habitats	\$38,780	\$40,000	Hawai'i Pacific Park Association
PA	Independence NHP	Repair Audiovisual Displays at the President's House Site	\$50,000	\$50,000	Friends of Independence
multi	Intermountain Regional Office	Increase Distance Learning Capability in Eight Parks in the Intermountain Region	\$30,000	\$30,000	National Park Foundation
MI	Isle Royale National Park	Ballast Water Treatment for Freshwater Ships	\$111,000	\$120,000	American Steamship Company
MO	Jefferson National Expansion Memorial	Engage the Youth of Ferguson	\$7,400	\$7,400	Jefferson National Parks Association
CA	Joshua Tree National Park	Repair Deteriorated Perimeter Fencing, Signage and Retaining Wall at Keys Ranch	\$11,723	\$11,760	Joshua Tree National Park Association
AK	Kenai Fjords National Park	Create Community Mural for Centennial Celebration	\$10,000	\$10,000	Alaska Geographic, Seward Mural Society
MI	Keweenaw National Historical Park	Establish Youth Stewardship Work Crew to Assist Heritage Sites and Partners	\$20,000	\$20,000	Keweenaw NHP Advisory Commission, National Parks of Lake Superior Foundation, and Isle Royale Keweenaw Parks Association

State	Unit Name	Project Title	Federal Share <sup>1</sup>	Total Partner	Partner
CA	Lava Beds National Monument	Capturing Vanishing Cave Resources for Future Generations	\$20,000	\$20,000	Fund for Parks
CA	Lava Beds National Monument	Develop Interpretive Materials to Engage Youth	\$30,000	\$30,000	Lava Beds Natural History Association
MA	Longfellow House-Washington's Headquarters	Restore Longfellow Garden Features	\$12,000	\$12,000	Friends of Longfellow House
MA	Lowell National Historical Park	Develop Interactive Components to River Transformed Exhibit	\$17,000	\$17,000	University of Massachusetts Lowell, Tsongas Industrial History Center
TX	Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park	Improve Walking Surfaces for Accessibility at Johnson Cemetery	\$10,391	\$10,455	Friends of Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park
KY	Mammoth Cave National Park	Implement CAVEservation Summer Camps	\$26,753	\$26,753	Friends of Mammoth Cave National Park
VT	Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park	Youth Volunteer Trails Network for Sustainable Maintenance and Healthy Parks	\$41,080	\$45,940	Woodstock Foundation and Woodstock Trails Partnership
MN	Mississippi National River & Recreation Area	Redesign the Mississippi River Visitor Center	\$100,000	\$100,000	National Park Foundation
WA	Mount Rainier National Park	Repair and Upgrade Trinka Memorial Greenhouse	\$20,000	\$20,000	Washington's National Park Fund and Washington Conservation Corps
WA	Mount Rainier National Park	Engage Youth and Volunteers to Rehabilitate Multiple Trails	\$20,000	\$20,000	Washington's National Park Fund
CA	Muir Woods National Monument	Replace Redwood Creek Trail and Ben Johnson Trail Bridges	\$30,000	\$32,000	Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy
DC	National Mall and Memorial Parks	Replace paved surfaces at Monroe (James) Park	\$79,000	\$79,000	Golden Triangle Business Improvement District
DC	National Mall and Memorial Parks	Install Display Fountain Circulation System and Rehabilitate Landscape at George Mason Memorial	\$470,080	\$470,080	Trust for the National Mall
NY	National Parks of New York Harbor	Develop a Mobile Application	\$50,000	\$110,000	Eastern National
WA	North Cascades National Park	Repair the Sahale Arm Trail	\$18,300	\$18,305	Washington's National Park Fund
WA	Olympic National Park	Engage Native American Youth in Cultural and Natural Resources Projects	\$15,000	\$15,000	NatureBridge and Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe
IL	Pullman NM	Create Interpretive Materials for Newly Established Park	\$50,000	\$50,000	National Park Foundation
VA	Richmond National Battlefield Park	Develop, Fabricate, and Install Signs on Cold Harbor Battlefield	\$10,396	\$15,000	Eastern National
AZ	Saguaro National Park	Create and Support the Next Generation Ranger Corps	\$20,000	\$25,000	Friends of Saguaro National Park
CA	Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area	Construct Accessible Trail and Trailhead Improvements at Cheeseboro Canyon	\$590,000	\$710,000	National Park Foundation and private donor
multi	Service-wide	Engage underserved youth through Buddy Bison program and Kids to Parks Day	\$450,000	\$450,000	National Park Trust
TN	Shiloh National Military Park	Replace Cannon Carriages on Shiloh Battlefield	\$37,000	\$37,000	Eastern National
AK	Sitka National Historical Park	Preserve and Digitize the E.W. Merrill Glass Plate Negative Collection	\$102,710	\$119,805	The Merrill Project
MI	Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore	Assess Trails for Needed ADA Accessibility Improvements	\$6,185	\$6,251	Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes
MI	Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore	Refurbish Faust Log Cabin Windows	\$10,383	\$15,383	Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear, Seeking Ecology Education and Design Solutions
MI	Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore	Improve Parking Lot, Install Vault Toilet, and Enhance Signage at Voice and North Bar Lake Roads	\$31,014	\$39,000	Traverse Area Recreational Trails, Inc.
PA	Steamtown National Historic Site	Restore Steam Locomotive Boston	\$60,000	\$60,000	Lackawanna and Wyoming Valley Railway Historical Society
AZ	Sunset Crater National Monument	Engage Arizona Conservation Corps in Rehabilitation Projects	\$22,065	\$22,066	National Park Foundation
FL	Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve	Replace Broward House Dock	\$3,000	\$5,000	Timucuan Trails and Parks Foundation
CA	Tule Lake Unit of WWII Valor in the Pacific NM	Conduct Historical Research and Gather Oral Histories	\$24,748	\$25,000	University of Maryland College of Information Studies
PA	Valley Forge National Historical Park	Provide Lighting for the New Event and Education Space	\$28,000	\$28,000	The Encampment Store
MN	Voyageurs National Park	Improve Cruiser Lake Hiking Trail	\$20,000	\$20,000	Voyageurs National Park Association
MN	Voyageurs National Park	Restore Wetlands Invaded by Non-native Cattail	\$20,000	\$20,000	Voyageurs National Park Association, Friends of Voyageurs National Park
AZ	Walnut Canyon National Monument	Engage Arizona Conservation Corps in Rehabilitation Projects	\$22,065	\$22,065	National Park Foundation
AK	Western Arctic National Parklands	Facilitate Alaskan Youth to Find Their Park	\$43,000	\$43,000	Alaska Geographic
CA	Whiskeytown National Recreation Area	Engage Youth Trail Crews to Address Deferred Maintenance	\$15,000	\$15,000	Friends of Whiskeytown

State	Unit Name	Project Title	Federal Share <sup>1</sup>	Total Partner	Partner
VA	Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts	Replace Shingles on Encore Circle Roof	\$10,000	\$15,000	Wolf Trap Foundation
VA	Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts	Purchase Two Wheelchair Lift Visitor Services Cart	\$12,600	\$12,600	Wolf Trap Foundation
VA	Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts	Replace Signage Parkwide	\$40,000	\$46,400	Wolf Trap Foundation
AZ	Wupatki National Monument	Engage Arizona Conservation Corps in Rehabilitation Projects	\$22,065	\$22,065	National Park Foundation
ID, MT, WY	Yellowstone National Park	Enhance Cutthroat Trout by Reducing Nonnative Trout in Yellowstone Lake	\$500,000	\$600,000	Yellowstone Park Foundation
ID, MT, WY	Yellowstone National Park	Gardiner Gateway Partnership Project	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	Yellowstone Park Foundation
CA	Yosemite National Park	Return Endangered Sierra Nevada Bighorn Sheep to Yosemite's Wilderness	\$106,756	\$106,756	The Yosemite Conservancy
CA	Yosemite National Park	Rehabilitate a Section of Trail in the Happy Isles Area	\$308,600	\$382,968	The Yosemite Conservancy and California Conservation Corps
CA	Yosemite National Park	Rehabilitate and Restore the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias	\$1,194,737	\$1,836,257	The Yosemite Conservancy
UT	Zion National Park	Support Youth Programming at Zion NP, Cedar Breaks NM, and Pipe Spring NM	\$87,030	\$100,384	Zion National Park Foundation, Zion Natural History Association
			<b>9,788,886.27</b>	<b>\$12,107,542</b>	

<sup>1</sup> Due to changes in partner match, there is currently \$211,114 in unallocated FY 2015 funds. The NPS applied these funds to FY 2016 projects.

### Questions Submitted by Representative Dan Newhouse

**Question 1.** Whenever the cost of access to publicly-owned lands or facilities is increased, I believe it is essential that it comes with commensurate increases in the quality of the user's experience. How will the additional revenues raised by this proposal improve the visitor's experience at national parks?

**Answer.** The additional revenues from lodging fees and the increase to the price of the senior pass will fund the NPS Second Century Fund. The Second Century Fund is a challenge program designed to match non-Federal donations to Federal funds on at least a 1-to-1 basis for projects and programs that improve the visitor experience and preserve our natural and cultural resources. The fund will include projects similar in nature to the types of projects that have been funded under the smaller Centennial Challenge program, which have included youth education programs, trail rehabilitation, overlook restoration, campground enhancements, exhibit replacement, accessibility improvements, and other projects that enhance the experience of park visitors.

**Question 2.** As you know, visitation at National Parks has declined by about 50 percent among youth over the past decade. How do you see this bill's provisions being used to reverse that troubling trend and help younger Americans appreciate our rich natural heritage?

**Answer.** The goal of the National Park Service Centennial is to connect with and create the next generation of park visitors, supporters, and advocates. Outreach efforts are therefore aimed at reaching younger audiences. We are accomplishing this through several Centennial programs including the "Find Your Park" campaign, the "Every Kid in a Park" initiative, and a multitude of other efforts that the NPS and our partners are engaged in.

The proposed legislation will add to our Centennial effort by establishing, clarifying, and expanding a number of key existing NPS authorities to allow us to better serve the American people. Among the 10 titles are many that would support youth engagement and education of our cultural and natural heritage.

The Centennial Declaration would recognize that the NPS has responsibility not only for administering the units of the National Park System, but for programs that provide financial and technical assistance to states, communities, and individuals to protect our national heritage. Many of these programs aid youth in local communities by building trails and playgrounds or supporting outdoor educational programs.

The National Park Centennial Challenge Fund would provide a Federal match for signature partnership projects that will help prepare the national parks for another century of conservation, preservation, and enjoyment. Many of the challenge projects funded in FY 2015 directly engaged youth through environmental or historic preservation project rehabilitation. Programs developed to engage youth are one of the priority considerations for future selections.

Finally, the proposed legislation would clarify that interpretation and education are key functions of the National Park Service and it would encourage the use of current technologies and the development of educational programs that reach diverse groups. As the keeper of our Nation's historic places and critical ecosystems, the NPS is an important educational resource, promoting historical and scientific

literacy and civic engagement skills. Through interpretation and education the NPS will continue to invite youth to connect with National Parks and their local communities.

*Question 3.* Americans can already make donations if they wish to the National Park Service and the individual parks it operates. How does the proposed National Park Foundation Endowment improve the Park Service's ability to develop and utilize private support?

*Answer.* Although Americans currently have the ability to make direct donations to the National Park Service and individual parks, it is our experience that donors are often reluctant to make a gift directly to a government agency, whether at the national or park level. However, they are drawn to supporting our nonprofit partners, such as the National Park Foundation, whose primary mission is to enrich our national parks and its programs through private support. The congressionally chartered Foundation has the staff, expertise, and time to work with them to structure and steward their gift and explore the tax implications. The nonprofit partner is also able to combine their donation with other gifts for greater impact.

We believe in the coming years that the majority of private philanthropic support will come from individual bequests and planned gifts. Baby boomers—the richest generation in American history—are currently working on their wills and planned giving. The proposed endowment would allow the National Park Foundation to create incentives for donors to have their gift matched or leveraged for maximum benefit to the parks. The Foundation could also seed new and more ambitious projects to benefit groupings of parks or parks with similar meanings and introduce new audiences to park philanthropy.

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Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Great. Thank you very much.

We will next hear from Mr. David MacDonald, who is the President of the Friends of Acadia from Bar Harbor, Maine.

**STATEMENT OF DAVID MACDONALD, PRESIDENT, FRIENDS OF ACADIA, BAR HARBOR, MAINE**

Mr. MACDONALD. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Tsongas, and members of the committee, thank you for including me in today's discussion. My organization, and many others like it around the country, considers this proposed legislation an important step forward in funding our national parks.

I have been lucky enough to grow up and live most of my life on Mount Desert Island on the coast of Maine, home to Acadia National Park. I currently serve as President and CEO of Friends of Acadia. We are a private, nonprofit organization with about 4,500 members. We work in close partnership with Acadia National Park, and have since our founding in 1986.

Our members love their park and are very proud to give back to the park through our organization, either through charitable donations or through volunteer service. Thousands of hours each year are donated to the park through our organization.

I hope that my testimony today, and the written testimony that I submitted, will give some specific examples of on-the-ground projects in a park like Acadia that have benefited from this kind of model of a challenge fund that the Centennial Act proposes.

I also hope that the examples will illustrate a handful of broader themes, which I will outline quickly here.

Number one, parks do inspire philanthropy. At Acadia, we are finding that the Centennial in particular is resonating for people as an opportunity to be part of this historic legacy.

Number two, challenge grants work, particularly when they are provided by the Federal Government. Our donors, from the largest,

most sophisticated donors, to the smaller donors writing their first check for \$25, respond to these challenge opportunities. They give more, and they decide to give more quickly when presented with this kind of opportunity.

Third and finally, our donors have consistently stressed to us that they do not want their philanthropy to substitute for the fundamental obligation of Congress to fund its national parks, the operations in particular. So, as we consider worthwhile mechanisms in legislation like this to establish new funding, please do not forget about the importance of the annual appropriations that are essential to our park's operation.

At Acadia, frankly, I feel like we are losing ground. Folks mentioned earlier some of the statistics. We basically have the same operating appropriation today that we did 7 years ago in 2009. What that means is we are losing ground, because visitation is increasing, public expectation for what the park will provide is increasing, and the cost of doing business is increasing—so we are losing ground.

Acadia is a small park by Western standards; it is about 35,000 acres. But we have more than 2½ million visitors at our park. Visitation was up last year by 13 percent. This year it is up another 7 percent to date. As I said, people's expectations for what the park provides are also growing. The park is a huge economic driver in our communities on the Maine coast: more than 3,000 jobs and more than \$200 million of economic activity is annually generated by Acadia.

As you know, \$10 million was appropriated by Congress last year for a version of a Centennial Challenge. At Acadia, we had three projects that were funded by that, a total of about \$165,000. We were able to restore historic trails, and we were able to reclaim scenic vistas from carriage roads and motor roads that had grown in and been lost over time. In each case, Friends of Acadia provided the private match to match the Federal funding in that regard; and in each case the challenge component was essential to our ability to raise that money.

In one case, one family had a strong feeling about a certain trail; they wrote the whole check. In another case, we did a campaign, had dozens of donors give very quickly in order to be part of the Centennial Challenge. So, it worked.

A couple of things to keep in mind, going forward, for how to make sure this legislation accomplishes what you are hoping. It is very important to have a sustainable source of funding, so I commend you for including the funding sources that are not appropriations. It is very hard to respond to this kind of challenge if you do not know that it is coming. And that is some feedback I have heard from other partners around the country.

Second, I would encourage you to consider building in more flexibility for groups like Friends of Acadia to actually implement some of the signature projects. I think that our groups have shown, as has the National Park Foundation, that private partners like ours can really provide nimbleness, creativity, and flexibility. So having all of the signature projects implemented by the Park Service may be something you reconsider and have partners have more of a role in that.

In closing, I just want to add a footnote that Acadia National Park also celebrates its centennial in 2016, so we have a dual centennial. There is no substitute for getting out in the parks and seeing the work we are doing. I invite any of you to come up to Acadia to see what we are doing for the centennial in 2016.

Thank you again for your work on this important Act. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. MacDonald follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID MACDONALD, PRESIDENT, FRIENDS OF ACADIA,  
BAR HARBOR, MAINE

Chairman McClintock, Ranking Member Tsongas, and other honorable members of this committee, thank you for the opportunity to be part of today's discussion regarding the proposed legislation, which I believe is an exciting development and a very positive step toward sustainable funding for our national parks in the coming centennial year and well into the future.

My name is David MacDonald and I have lived most of my life on Mount Desert Island, Maine, home to Acadia National Park. I currently serve as President and CEO of Friends of Acadia (FOA), a private, not-for-profit organization with more than 4,000 members that has worked in close partnership with the National Park Service since our founding in 1986. Our members love Acadia and are proud to give back to the park through our organization with philanthropic donations and thousands of hours of volunteer work.

One recent example from just last month is our annual Take Pride in Acadia community work-day, when more than 400 volunteers turned out to help rake leaves from the drainage ditches of Acadia's carriage roads, and help park staff put these historically significant roads to bed for the winter. This one morning of volunteer labor saves the park tens of thousands of dollars in labor and many times that if preventative maintenance did not help avoid the very costly storm damage and winter washouts that have taken a heavy toll on these gravel roads in the past.

So although Acadia is relatively quiet this time of year compared to summer or fall, the work of protecting this park continues round the clock and throughout the year, and FOA is very honored to be part of the partnership that accomplishes this work which has helped inspire some amazing accolades of late for our park, including readers of *USA Today* voting Acadia America's Best National Park last year, as well as viewers of *Good Morning America* voting Acadia America's Favorite Place.

While I hope that my role here today will be to help provide some tangible and specific recent examples from the "front lines" of a park like Acadia of how a centennial matching program like the proposed Centennial Challenge Fund would inspire additional philanthropy and accomplish priority projects, I would also like to stress three broader messages that I hope Acadia's on-the-ground projects convey:

1. First, national parks are incredibly powerful settings that truly represent our country at its best and have the ability to inspire those who experience them to donate toward their maintenance and improvement. And at Acadia we are finding that the Centennial, in particular, is resonating as an opportunity for residents and visitors to be part of this historic parks legacy.
2. Second, it has been my experience that donors absolutely respond to the opportunity of a challenge grant and matching funding. FOA supporters ranging from the very large, sophisticated donors to those sending a \$35 check as an annual membership donation like to see their dollars stretched and leveraged.
3. Third, throughout our 30-year history of doing this kind of work at Acadia, donors have consistently stressed that they do not want their contribution to become a substitute for the Federal Government itself continuing to invest in national parks. So as you pursue worthwhile legislation like this to create new revenue, please do not forget the critical importance of the fundamental congressional appropriations that are essential to maintaining these national treasures unimpaired for future generations to enjoy.

Acadia National Park is a conservation gem and economic powerhouse that I am honored to serve. Relatively small in size, at only 35,000 acres, Acadia is within a day's drive of major cities of the Northeast and therefore is one of the most heavily used parks in the Nation, with more than 2.6 million visitors each year. Visitation has been growing steadily in recent years, up 13 percent last year and another 7 percent so far this year.



At the same time that the number of visits is growing, so is the range of services and experiences sought at a park like Acadia. Whether it is Internet connectivity, or search and rescue operations, or accommodation of activities like paddle-boarding or mountain-biking that Acadia's founders could not have even dreamed of, the public is asking more of a park like Acadia than ever before. Local businesses in the surrounding communities also see their livelihoods closely tied to the park's successful operations; during the government shutdown two Octobers ago, our communities lost more than \$1 million per day in economic activity. Many of my friends and peers are among the restaurant owners, guides, and shopkeepers who make up some of the 3,000 jobs and \$200 million of annual economic benefit driven by Acadia National Park.

Acadia was also the first national park created entirely through private donations of land from neighboring landowners, when visionaries such as George B. Dorr and John D. Rockefeller Jr. and dozens of others assembled strategic tracts of land with bold Atlantic coastline, mountain-tops, remote ponds, and pristine woodlands and granted them to the Federal Government nearly 100 years ago. Indeed, there is a very long history of private initiative, philanthropy, community pride and investment, and volunteerism in our park—as these very principles will be essential to our ability to prepare the park for its second century.

As you know, an initial phase of a centennial challenge program was approved and funded by Congress last year. \$10 million was made available, and despite the very short notice and call for proposals for FY 2015, FOA and our partners at Acadia National Park submitted six projects. Three of them were ultimately selected to be among the 106 proposals funded nationwide that together involved 90 different partner organizations contributing nearly \$16 million in private matching funds. These significant investments in our parks were stitched together with barely more than a couple of weeks' notice. In looking at your proposed NPS Centennial Act, I believe that the number of projects, the amount of match, and the impact of the projects could all be enhanced with the benefit of a reliable, established program with lead time and dependable funding. Thank you for considering ongoing funding sources that will help keep this model from being a one-shot deal in the centennial year only.

At Acadia, we were able to tackle a variety of projects that were part of the park's maintenance backlog, but also provided tremendous opportunity for visitor engagement and public benefit. The largest project involved the restoration of historic scenic vistas from the park carriage roads and motor roads that had grown in with vegetation over time. Careful planning and documentation was done to understand the original scope and purpose of the vistas as planned by noted landscape architects Beatrix Farrand and Frederick Law Olmsted nearly a century ago. Skilled park sawyers were complemented by citizen volunteers willing to drag brush up to the chipping operation at the roadside. Certain plots were selected for small experimental burns thought to be more effective for some vegetation, and interpretive panels engaged the public in the purpose and methods of the project.

To come up with our \$85,000 share of the match for this project, given the short notice of the opportunity in the spring, FOA quickly decided to draw on existing reserve funds, with the hope of replenishing them with new donations raised over the course of the summer. This strategy paid off when by August we had raised more than 50 gifts toward the project ranging in size from \$35 to \$75,000 and shattering our \$85,000 goal. I am confident that the fact that we were able to tell donors that the Federal Government was matching us dollar for dollar made all the difference in motivating the number and scale of donations we received in such a short time.

Another centennial project at Acadia involved the rehabilitation of the Deer Brook Trail, an extremely popular hiking trail that runs west from Jordan Pond up toward the summits of Sargent Mountain and Penobscot Mountain. The trail had become severely eroded, diminishing both the hiking experience and the environmental health of Deer Brook as it cascades down the mountains toward Jordan Pond, one of the clearest ponds in the state of Maine and which serves as the public drinking water supply for the village of Seal Harbor. In this case, we had been in discussions for quite some time with a family that had expressed interest in seeing this trail repaired. After making an initial donation 2 years ago, the family was reluctant to fund further work unless the Park Service itself had "skin in the game." When we let this family know of our ability to propose the trail work as a Centennial project earlier this year, this spurred them to pledge a second gift of \$70,000 to cover the private portion of the project. The work that was done this summer involved park trail crews, volunteers, as well as local teens hired on to the Acadia Youth Conservation Corps, a joint program of FOA and the Park Service that allows us to hire 15 high school students each summer to tackle ambitious work projects,

while also providing the kids with opportunities to learn about and connect with their park.

These recent Centennial Challenge projects build on a long history at Acadia of blending private philanthropy with Federal dollars to benefit the park and its visitors. In the early 1990s we undertook a public-private partnership to restore Acadia's 45-mile network of gravel carriage roads following decades of government neglect. We worked with Congress to commit \$6 million of Federal appropriations while agreeing to raise \$4 million in private contributions that would serve as a permanent endowment held at Friends of Acadia to ensure continued maintenance of the roads over the long term. Friends of Acadia annually grants funds to Acadia under the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding regarding the endowment, which has helped spin off a total of more than \$5 million since its establishment. So I endorse the concept in your bill of an endowment at the National Park Foundation, as this is a tool that has helped greatly at Acadia in smoothing out the inevitable peaks and valleys of annual funding cycles.

A decade later, Friends of Acadia undertook another campaign that similarly matched private donations with public funds to help restore and endow the maintenance of Acadia's historic hiking trail system. This time, the government's share came largely from revenue collected at Acadia through visitor entrance fees (and I know that your committee has recently taken up important work to reauthorize the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act). This campaign went on to be a model for other parks and Friends groups around the country. Yet I don't believe that it would have been possible if we had not been able to tell our private donors that the Federal Government was coming to the table with a significant investment in the project.

All of us at Friends of Acadia are proud of our long history and strong partnership with the Park Service, however we are also firm in our conviction that we, the people of the United States, through our Federal Government, have a perpetual responsibility to assure the conservation of Acadia unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations. Private philanthropy has a critical role to play in the future of our parks, but there are limits to that role. Friends of Acadia works hard to add value to our national parks rather than fund core operations, which are ultimately the responsibility of Congress.

At Acadia, it is alarming to realize that despite the park's growing visitation, popularity, and expectations from the public, the congressional appropriation for park operations last year was basically the same as it was in 2009. Given the rising cost of doing business, this flat funding has meant that park staffing has inevitably taken the hit, and Acadia has fewer FTEs than it did 7 years ago. On top of that, a growing percentage of these FTEs now consist of seasonal hires, who while very important to visitor services, cannot be expected to tackle the longer-term planning and prioritizing needed to prepare the park for its second century. Viewed at the national level, there has been a 12 percent decrease or \$370 million reduction in the total budget for the National Park Service over the last 5 years in today's dollars.

The concept of a centennial challenge fund has been discussed since at least 2007. Now is the time to build upon lessons learned from the past efforts and to create an opportunity for Congress and private partners to design a fund that will inspire private donors to look invest in the Park Service's second century. In particular, we encourage a program that would be inclusive of a wide array of possible ways to give, and as you look to finalize this discussion draft, I am interested in working with other partners and colleagues to discuss how the Centennial Challenge Fund might be strengthened and further leveraged by enabling Friends groups like FOA to directly implement signature projects and programs. Friends of Acadia and other groups like us around the country have shown that partners to the Park Service can provide critical flexibility, innovation, cost effectiveness, and a trusted broker for donors wanting to add to our national parks legacy. Of course, we see this at the national level with an organization like the National Park Foundation's great work. And in light of my previous comments about the importance of congressional appropriations to support park operations, I would urge each of you to remember that legislation such as that proposed today should be providing sustainable, *supplemental* funding for parks, not funds that would be considered a *substitution* for funds lost as part of sequestration or shrinking park appropriations.

With 2016 just a few weeks off, it is important to note that Acadia National Park shares that same centennial year with the broader National Park Service (NPS). In fact, President Woodrow Wilson signed the legislation authorizing Federal protection of the initial lands within Acadia on July 8 just a few weeks before he signed the Organic Act establishing the NPS at the end of August, 1916. We are certainly prepared and motivated to bring our best thinking and resources to bear to ensure

that Acadia's second century is launched with the same level of inspiration and leadership exhibited by the park's founders 100 years ago. We are working together with more than 220 centennial partners from throughout the community—businesses, schools, libraries, art galleries, museums, gardens and more—each of whom will embody our centennial slogan which is “celebrate our past and inspire our future.”

I greatly appreciate the opportunity to share testimony with your committee today, and hope that you will not hesitate to let me know if I can assist with follow up questions or suggestions. And in conclusion, I invite each of you to pay us a visit at Acadia during the coming centennial year, when you will find a community-driven, world-welcoming celebration of our park unfolding all year long. I know that members of Maine's congressional delegation including Congresswoman Pingree and Congressman Poliquin would be glad to join me in helping to host you or your staff in experiencing Acadia first-hand. In the meantime, thank you for your work on the National Park Service Centennial Act.

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Mr. McCLINTOCK. Thank you very much.

Finally, we welcome back Mr. John Nau with the National Park Foundation from Houston, Texas to testify.

**STATEMENT OF JOHN L. NAU, III, VICE CHAIRMAN (2012–2013),  
NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION, HOUSTON, TEXAS**

Mr. NAU. Thank you, Chairman Bishop, Ranking Member Grijalva, Chairman McClintock, Ranking Member Tsongas, and members of the subcommittee. Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify before you today regarding Chairman Bishop's draft, the “National Park Service Centennial Act.” I believe that my background as a businessman who has had the opportunity to experience how parks can serve as economic drivers is what best positions me to assist the subcommittee as you consider legislative proposals to enhance the National Park System for another century of service.

The National Park Foundation is the congressionally-authorized charitable nonprofit charged with securing philanthropic and corporate support for national parks projects and programs, and I am proud to be a member of that board. In that capacity, the Foundation has a great deal invested in ensuring that the Centennial of the Service will be a catalyst for many steps necessary to prepare our parks for another century of success.

The Centennial represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Americans of all ages, races, location, genders, including Members of Congress, to unite behind a shared vision for building upon the success of the National Park System during its second century. Realizing this goal will require us to generate innovative new approaches to improve visitor experience and create a much better funding model to support our parks.

We believe that the draft legislation the subcommittee is considering today has the potential to serve as that galvanizing mechanism needed to achieve that goal, and I am pleased to appear before you not only to offer the Foundation's strong support for this discussion draft, but to share recommendations we have for improvements.

The Foundation strongly supports the proposed authorization of a Centennial Challenge Fund, which would be paired with dedicated funding and require a non-Federal match. The Centennial Challenge would create a strong incentive for increased

philanthropic contributions to park programs and projects leading up to, during, and beyond the year of the centennial.

In addition, the Foundation supports the proposed long-overdue increase in the purchase price of the senior citizen lifetime pass as a way to help pay for this important program. We would welcome an opportunity to work with the members of this subcommittee and your staff to identify additional offsets that can be utilized to increase the funding for the Centennial Challenge.

The Foundation strongly supports the proposed authorization of an endowment housed in the Foundation. Establishing this long-term funding source would allow the Foundation to raise significantly more private funding for park projects and programs as part of donors' estate and philanthropic contribution planning.

The Foundation also supports the establishment of overnight fees as a mechanism to provide funding for the endowment, and we would welcome an opportunity to work with you, your staff, and other interested parties to refine this proposal in a manner that can garner universal support within the final legislation.

As with the Centennial Challenge, we would welcome the opportunity to work with the members of this subcommittee and the staff to identify any additional offsets that can be utilized to increase funding availability.

We also strongly support the draft legislation's inclusion of amendments to the NPF charter that would transition the Secretary of the Interior and the Director of the National Park Service to ex officio, non-voting members.

The Foundation also supports the discussion draft's authorization of \$25 million to be appropriated each year over the course of 10 years to the Foundation to be used for important projects.

In conclusion, the National Park Service Centennial is not official until 2016. But our Find Your Park program of public engagement has already begun. Visitation is up, particularly in the big parks, and the program has only begun to be effective.

We thank the committee, the Chairmen, and the Ranking Members for their work. The Foundation stands behind the effort to improve the National Park Service over the next 100 years. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Nau follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN L. NAU, III, PRESIDENT & CEO, SILVER EAGLE DISTRIBUTORS, BOARD MEMBER, NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION, HOUSTON, TEXAS

Chairman McClintock, Ranking Member Tsongas and members of the subcommittee, I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you today regarding Chairman Bishop's draft National Parks Centennial Anniversary legislation. I have been a member of the National Park Foundation's Board of Directors for more than 7 years and I served as Vice-Chairman of the Board, the highest ranking private citizen position, from 2012–2013. Additionally, I am the Chairman Emeritus of the Civil War Trust and I also had the honor of serving as the Chairman of the President's Advisory Council on Historic Preservation from 2002–2009. I believe that my background as a businessman, who has had the opportunity to experience how parks can serve as economic drivers beyond their borders, is what best positions me to assist the subcommittee as you legislate vital enhancements to the National Park System for another century of service.

Chartered by Congress in 1967, the National Park Foundation is founded on a legacy that began more than a century ago, when private citizens from all walks of life took action to establish and protect our national parks. Today, the National Park Foundation carries on that tradition as the national charitable nonprofit whose sole mission is to directly support the National Park Service.

2016 will mark the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. The Centennial represents a 'once in a lifetime' opportunity for Americans to come together to celebrate the achievements that have been realized as the result of "America's Best Idea." Most importantly, the anniversary presents an opportunity for Americans of all ages, races, genders, ethnicities and political affiliations to unite behind a shared vision for building upon the success of the National Park System during its second century. This is our opportunity to both celebrate the past and look to the future.

In addition to celebrating past accomplishments and reconnecting Americans to their parks, the Centennial Anniversary presents an opportunity to generate innovative new approaches to improve the visitor experience and create a better funding model to support our parks. We believe that the draft legislation you are considering today has the potential to serve as the galvanizing mechanism needed to achieve that goal.

That is why I am pleased to appear before you to testify on behalf of the National Park Foundation to offer our strong support for this draft legislation. I will also share recommendations we have for improvements to it.

#### CENTENNIAL CHALLENGE

The Foundation strongly supports the discussion draft's authorization of a Centennial Challenge fund paired with 'dedicated' funding. Enactment of these provisions, which would require a non-Federal match, would undoubtedly create a strong incentive for increased philanthropic contributions to park programs and projects leading up to, during and beyond the year of the Centennial Anniversary in 2016.

In addition, the Foundation supports the proposed overdue increase in the purchase price of the "senior citizen lifetime pass" as a way to help pay for this important program. The Foundation and its staff would welcome the opportunity to work with members of the subcommittee and your staff to identify additional offsets that can be utilized to increase the funding available for the Centennial Challenge.

#### NPF ENDOWMENT

We strongly support the proposed authorization of an endowment housed at the Foundation, which will establish a long-term funding source for important park projects and programs. The endowment will allow the Foundation to raise significantly more private funding for the parks as part of donors' estate planning and gift giving. Endowment growth serves to build a stable long-term source of private resources for Parks.

The Foundation supports the establishment of 'bed fees' as a mechanism to provide funding for the endowment. Currently, at many Parks, guests at hotels located within the boundaries of national parks do not pay the hotel occupancy taxes paid by park visitors staying outside the boundaries. This represents a lost opportunity to capture fees hotel guests are already accustomed to paying for the benefit of the parks. That said, we look forward to working with members of the committee and your staff and other interested parties to include in the legislation some accommodation to address the collection and administration of these fees.

Finally, we would welcome the opportunity to work with members of the subcommittee and your staff to identify additional offsets that can be utilized to increase the funding available for this important endowment.

#### PARK FOUNDATION STRUCTURE

The Foundation strongly supports the draft legislation's inclusion of amendments to the NPF charter that would transition the Secretary of the Interior and the Director of the National Park Service to ex officio, non-voting members of the National Board of Directors. The Foundation's authorizing legislation names the Secretary of the Interior as the Chair of the NPF Board and the Director of the National Park Service as the Secretary of the NPF Board. As with any cabinet position, the Secretary of the Interior is a job that has turnover due to national elections and other factors. History has shown that a change in administration occasionally leads to a change in NPF leadership. The resulting uncertainty can be avoided by allowing the board to select its own leadership.

The Foundation also supports the discussion draft's authorization of \$25 million to be appropriated each year, over the course of 10 years, to the NPF to be utilized to match non-Federal contributions for park projects and programs. This would result in a significant increase in the leveraging of private funds to benefit parks and visitors similar to the successful model set forth in the charter of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

## EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

The Foundation also supports efforts that would diversify, strengthen and enhance interpretive programs in our national parks while also expanding the role of volunteers in these programs. In particular, it is our hope that these provisions will help generate meaningful new ways to engage Americans that historically have low park visitation rates, such as Hispanics, urban dwellers and Millennials. This will require modernizing the technology used to recruit new visitors so that we can reach them through social media and wherever else we need to go to engage them. In addition, we need to work harder to engage urban populations by better highlighting the many wonderful urban parks already in existence.

## CONCLUSION

As the National Parks Centennial Anniversary approaches, it is truly inspiring to see a diverse and bipartisan coalition of lawmakers, nonprofit organizations, businesses and individuals uniting behind a shared commitment to seizing the historic opportunity presented by the Centennial Anniversary to develop and execute innovative new approaches that will ensure that our national parks achieve another century of success.

While Federal appropriations should remain the largest funding source for the National Park Service, it is unlikely that current Federal budget constraints will be reversed or even alleviated in the near future. Therefore, it is imperative that we utilize the 2016 Centennial to explore new funding models that can be utilized to supplement the taxpayer investments needed to prepare and sustainably fund our parks for another 100 years of service. Without enhancements and improvements we risk a first-time visit to a national park becoming a one-time visit instead of a life-long love for these amazing places.

This new paradigm must include finding new ways to incentivize even greater philanthropic and corporate investments in our parks going forward. That said, it is vital that our emerging coalition works together over the next 15 months to seek the appropriate balance between the need to avoid overcommercialization and the need to enhance and expand attribution for desperately needed corporate investments in our parks.

We must see supporting our parks not as just the role of taxpayers and Congress or just private citizens or foundations. We must see it as working together in concert to support our parks with Federal funds, private philanthropy, corporate partnerships, fees and volunteerism.

The Centennial of the National Park Service comes around only once and the focus of millions of Americans will be on our national parks between now and the end of 2016. We have a tremendous opportunity to capitalize on this momentum and excitement to help prepare the National Park Service for a second century of success. This will require that we place our political and philosophical differences aside to work jointly on behalf of future generations so that they too can experience and realize the many benefits of "America's Best Idea" as we have.

In closing, the National Park Foundation believes that the Chairman's discussion draft National Park Service Centennial Act is an outstanding step toward achieving the goals I have outlined today. We look forward to working with the entire committee and the rest of our emerging coalition to continue refining and ultimately enacting this vitally important legislation. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

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Mr. McCLINTOCK. Great. Thank you for your testimony. We will now go to questions by the Members, and we will begin with myself.

I first want to get the record straight on National Park Service funding, because that has been mentioned on a number of occasions at a number of hearings. Over the past 10 years, the nominal appropriation for NPS has grown from \$2.256 billion in Fiscal Year 2006 to \$2.615 billion in Fiscal Year 2015. That is a \$359 million increase.

Inflation adjusted, though, the Park Service budget has been relatively flat, actually down about two-tenths of 1 percent over that decade. But this followed the prior decade, where nominal funding

increased by 65 percent. There was also one year—in 2009, in a single year, the Park Service's budget increased by 37 percent.

Funding is an issue which this bill seeks to address, but is not in and of itself explanatory for the enormous deferred maintenance backlog that has developed, and the decline in overnight stays at our parks.

Mr. Jarvis, my first question involves the deferred maintenance backlog. Last year's National Defense Authorization Act included several new park units for the National Park Service to manage. It seems every year this committee receives requests to designate new national parks or national monuments to be managed by your agency. Do these new units add to your maintenance backlog? And how do you allocate resources to these areas when you are, at least inflation-adjusted, at a relatively flat budget?

Mr. JARVIS. Thank you for that question, Chairman. I think it is a very important area to explore.

Yes, they do add to our maintenance backlog, though we try our best when working with Congress in the establishment of any new units to minimize our additional responsibilities through partnerships. For instance, the designation of the Manhattan Project National Historic Park is in partnership with the Department of Energy; and even though there are specific assets identified within that park that were established by Congress, we are working very closely with the Department of Energy to ensure that very few of those assets become a liability for our maintenance backlog.

But, they are not free. Each one of these new parks that come into the system do have some responsibilities, both from an operational standpoint and a maintenance backlog standpoint. But, I can assure you we are working very, very hard to minimize the amount of new responsibilities that come with these new areas.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Thank you. We have heard a number of retailers would like to sell national park passes, just as, for example, grocery stores provide postal services now at their facilities. Why are annual and daily passes for the national parks so difficult to purchase, except at the park itself? And why won't the Park Service consider these types of cooperative arrangements with retailers?

Mr. JARVIS. We are exploring some new ways—technically and legally, you can do third-party sales. The problem is that whoever the third party is has to buy the passes, because they are essentially valued property, rather than us just authorizing their sale. But we are looking at new models, and we have a couple of experiments—Acadia being one of those—about mobile passes and other ways that we can use technology.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Well, my experience is a lot of the retailers at the gateway communities know as much or more about the parks than the park rangers themselves. A park ranger from Hawaii assigned to Yosemite does not know nearly as much about Yosemite as someone who grew up there going to the park every weekend for years. Those are the folks that are employed in the local shops. It seems to me that that is an enormous resource that we are simply squandering.

Mr. JARVIS. I think the gateway communities are extraordinarily important to these parks. One of the areas that we have really

expanded on that is a huge opportunity is the concept of step-on interpretation, where locals basically can provide that kind of interpretation locally within the park. Our battlefield guides are a great example of that, at Gettysburg, Antietam, and Manassas, where local community members that live in that community are Civil War buffs.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. I am going to have to cut you off, because I want to get one more question in. It is about a complaint we are receiving a lot of, and that is the policy of individual parks to ban bottled water. As you can imagine, there are a lot of complaints on that.

What is the justification for that, particularly when you can buy soda in a can, you just cannot buy bottled water?

Mr. JARVIS. The justification is sort of threefold. One is, first of all, it is not just an open ban. There are about 20 parks out of the 409 that currently have water bottle bans in place. So it is not broad across the system.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. My time is up. But just so you know, it is a growing source of complaints, and I would strongly advise you to do something about that.

Ms. Tsongas.

Ms. TSONGAS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman; and thank you all for being here. I think, from all of your testimonies, especially Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Nau—and I think Director Jarvis knows this well—that the impact of our national parks is really clear. And this was perhaps never more clear than when the government shutdown occurred. Mr. MacDonald, I think you referenced the cost to the gateway communities as a result of it in your written testimony.

Our national parks are a great investment. Each Federal dollar invested in these parks generates \$10 in economic activity. It is a tremendous return on investment to our local economies. But despite this economic impact, we have been chronically underfunding our parks, leading to a growing backlog of maintenance and infrastructure needs, as we all know.

I know all the members of the committee are very concerned about this. It amounts to \$11.5 billion in deferred maintenance costs. So today, as we consider the Centennial, I think we have to take into account the impact of those billions of dollars in deferred maintenance, and how best to address it.

I would like to share a slide that demonstrates the serious decline in funding for the National Park Service construction account.

[Slide]

Ms. TSONGAS. As the slide demonstrates, the construction account, which is the primary account to address the non-roads half of the maintenance backlog, has gone from over \$350 million in Fiscal Year 2005 to less than \$150 million in Fiscal Year 2015. This is roughly a 62 percent decrease over the last 10 years—fairly dramatic, I would say.

I think it shows us what the smoking gun is, what the real impact has been on our national parks as a struggle to deal with this maintenance backlog.

Director Jarvis, can you talk about why the backlog has grown so large? And do you feel that the discussion draft before us today



can provide enough funding to make a significant dent in the backlog?

Mr. JARVIS. Thank you, Congresswoman. So the maintenance backlog has grown because the National Park Service has, in terms of assets—we have road assets and non-road assets. In terms of physical facilities that we manage and maintain, we are second only to the Department of Defense in total facilities. And those facilities provide access and public enjoyment across the 409 national park units.

The infrastructure is quite old. Most of it was built turn-of-the-century, particularly in the 1960s, when there was a major investment in the National Park System with Mission 66. Those systems—wastewater, water treatment, sewer systems, buildings, infrastructure—are all now pushing 50, 60 years old.

We have a very good inventory of our system. We know every asset, its current condition, and what it is going to take. We need, basically, twice as much money as we currently have in our construction program to just keep even with the current backlog.

The construction budget—you are spot on there—has several other sources. Our recreation fee program, what we call the repair/rehab program, goes into the non-road assets. And then, of course, Congress is working on a transportation bill that has some road money for us, as well.

But, in the Administration's bill, which requests \$300 million in Title III for 3 years in a row, if we were to receive that funding for 10 years in a row, we could bring the non-road high-priority assets across the entire system, about 6,000 assets, to good condition.

Ms. TSONGAS. I actually have a follow-on graph that I wanted to show.

[Slide]

Ms. TSONGAS. The top piece of it shows the discussion draft before us. And, thankfully, it is important that we begin this discussion and the kind of investment that would be made in the maintenance backlog.

Then, the second piece of it shows what would be the investment that would be made under H.R. 3556, Mr. Grijalva's bill.

The next piece shows the annual minimum required to maintain the current levels.

Then the bottom piece just shows the total maintenance backlog that has accumulated over time.

So, Director Jarvis, again, how better could we help you address this?

Mr. JARVIS. Well, I think it is——

Ms. TSONGAS. A leading question, I know.

Mr. JARVIS. That is OK. I think the maintenance backlog has to be addressed in a number of ways.

One, there are projects that you can raise private dollars to support. We have a subset of those, and we work with our Friends organization and the National Park Foundation to leverage some Federal skin in the game against philanthropy.

Then, there are projects that are purely a Federal responsibility. No one is going to give me philanthropy to fix a wastewater treatment plant. That is a Federal responsibility. So, these cycle

through in need and investment. Unless we put up the money now, it is pay-me-later, as well, this backlog will grow faster than we are investing in it.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Thank you.

Ms. TSONGAS. Thank you, Director Jarvis.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mrs. Lummis.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Director Jarvis, you mentioned in your last statement it would take two times the money to just keep even with the backlog. Can you explain that a little more?

Mr. JARVIS. Roughly, to keep even with our current backlog, we would need about \$800 million annually to address the non-road maintenance backlog. We currently, through Fiscal Year 2015, receive just a little bit over \$400 million annually for non-road assets. So we would need about twice that, or \$800 million.

So, we parse that into the non-road, high-priority assets. High-priority assets are the ones that directly serve the public; they are the historic homes that are the principal reason the park exists, or a road or trail that provides access to an asset. We would need to get annual appropriations in addition to what our current is, at least what has been requested in the Administration's bill, which is \$300 million per year.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Can you provide some examples of how the Centennial Challenge Fund would enable the National Park Service to tackle portions of that maintenance backlog through the partnership entities?

Mr. JARVIS. Absolutely, Congresswoman. David MacDonald mentioned a few projects in Acadia. I can absolutely provide the committee a full list of the kinds of projects that we have leveraged through the recent \$10 million Centennial program.

But, for instance, on the Blue Ridge Parkway, we have done trails for accessibility. We have done preservation of projects: Cape Cod National Seashore, we did some of the historic buildings; we have done rehab at Cemetery Ridge at Gettysburg; the Grand Canyon rehab; and a variety of trails.

Some of the larger projects: Grand Teton, in your home state; working on historic CCC projects that were built 75 years ago; and Great Smokey Mountains, increasing trail access. A big project here in the Chairman's district and Yosemite National Park is rehabilitating the Mariposa Grove. It is a project where the Federal share was about \$1.1 million; and the partner, Yosemite Conservancy, has put up \$1.8 million. So, we are getting a major restoration at the Mariposa Grove.

We literally have hundreds of projects where a one-to-one match has actually been leveraged more than one-to-one by our partners across the system.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Most of us are aware that, when the national parks began, it was the railroads who frequently built the beautiful facilities in these parks. So, the parks were founded with a long-standing history of public-private partnerships. And working with concessionaires, clearly, the railroads had skin in the game when it came to getting visitors out to the national parks.

Do you have the authority you need to work with concessionaires to address the deferred maintenance backlog, and to help

underwrite rehabilitation and replacement, or even expansion of some of the visitors infrastructure?

Mr. JARVIS. Not really. Let me, if you don't mind, take a minute to talk about the current relationship with our concessioners.

First of all, we have great concessioners. The companies that we work with provide extraordinarily great service to the American public. Congress reformed the concessions law in 1995. We went to a new concessions law, and it did several positive things. One, is it increased competition; it resulted in an increase of the franchise fees back to the National Park Service, to the Federal Government, that we could reinvest in facilities.

But, there are a couple of issues that I think continue to be a problem. We have proposed, in the Administration's bill, a new authority called the Visitor Services Management Authority, that would allow us to at least experiment with being more consistent with private sector practices for lodging and food services than we currently have under the concessions law.

The real issue is this thing called leaseholder surrender interest that, under current concessions law, when a concessioner invests in a facility that is owned by the National Park Service to significantly improve it, to meet expectations of current visitors, that investment grows over the life of the contract. So, at the end of the contract, we owe the concessioner that value that it has grown.

In the example of the Grand Canyon contract most recently re-competed, we owed the concessioner \$150 million, in spite of the fact that they were making a profit throughout that period.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. The gentlelady's—

Mrs. LUMMIS. Yes, my time has expired.

Mr. JARVIS. OK.

Mrs. LUMMIS. But I would mention that he volunteered to give us a list of those items, and I would like to ask for that.

Mr. JARVIS. Absolutely.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Thank you, Director.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Ms. Dingell.

Mrs. DINGELL. I want to continue to follow on your line of questioning, because I share that concern. I thank you for your recognition, Mr. Chairman.

Next year, we are approaching an important anniversary, the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service, which we have been talking about. For me, and for all of us, it is a time to celebrate the successful track record the NPS has had managing some of the most beautiful, iconic places in our Nation, including Sleeping Bear Dunes, the Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, the River Raisin National Battlefield, et cetera.

But, I think it is also an opportunity to give the Park Service the resources and authorities that they need to do their job in the 21st century. I do not think we should let this opportunity pass by. So, I want to talk about some of the differences in the discussion draft we are considering today and the Ranking Member's legislation.

Mr. Nau, why is it important to legislatively establish an endowment and provide a source of funding beyond those individual contributions?

And, to continue along the lines of Mrs. Lummis, the Ranking Member's bill included a section that establishes the National Park

Service's Visitor Service Management Program. It would provide the National Park Service with the authority to offer new types of concession contracts to run facilities like hotels and restaurants. I think it sounds like an idea worth looking into, and it is not included in the discussion draft. Could you talk more about that, as well, building on what you were talking about?

Mr. NAU. I can only address the issue of the endowment. If the endowment had been formed back on the 50th anniversary, we would probably be dealing with close to \$1 billion, given the track record of many institutions, including major and small universities.

We are about ready to have the Baby Boomer generation engage in long-standing estate planning. If we have a mechanism to engage that level of giving and philanthropy, it needs to come through an endowment. If I am going to provide that kind of substantial gift, I am going to want to know that it is going to perpetuate itself. Over a 20-year period, that is an 8 percent return a year, with a spending rate of probably 4½–5, 5½ percent. If that money were here, the Park Service, working with the Foundation, could probably have \$250–\$500 million a year in additional funding for programs and other areas of addressing the visitor experience.

We have talked a lot here about the backlog. I think we also need to focus on the visitor experience of the target generations and demographics that are not currently visiting the parks: Millennials, Hispanic immigrants, and urban dwellers. That is what the Find Your Park program is all about, and that is what it targets.

Now, I cannot speak to the concessions question, ma'am.

Mrs. DINGELL. OK.

Mr. NAU. I would have to defer to John.

Mrs. DINGELL. I think that these public-private partnerships really are the wave of the future. We are not going to have enough time, we only have a minute and 17 seconds. So, if you could continue to build on that; and, like my colleague, Mrs. Lummis, I would like to follow up on these after today with more questions.

Mr. JARVIS. I do think that public-private partnerships are the key. We really need and support the private sector to provide these kinds of services in the national parks. And the Visitor Services Management Authority, which is in the Administration's bill, would give us a broad range of flexibility to try new tools that could result in significant improvement in investment in these facilities, to upgrade them, as well as the potential for bundling projects, commercial facilities, together to make them more attractive to the private sector, as well.

I think that what we are asking for is essentially a new set of authorities to work more closely with the private sector.

Mrs. DINGELL. Thank you. I guess I will yield back my 23 seconds.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Westerman.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the witnesses for being here today.

Mr. MacDonald, I was reading your testimony, where you mentioned the recent community work day that attracted over 400 volunteers to help restore roads in Acadia. I think they were cleaning out ditches and doing other activities. It reminded me of

work that volunteers in my district have done on both the Buffalo National River and Hot Springs National Park.

What more can be done by the National Park Service to galvanize this type of volunteerism and community engagement?

Mr. MACDONALD. Thank you for the question. It has been an important part of our organization since its founding. We were founded by volunteers who wanted to give back more time.

I think what is most meaningful to a lot of our volunteers is to work side by side with park staff. They take great pride in being alongside someone with a uniform, or someone who is working for these parks. They really want to see the parks well taken care of, well funded.

I think that there should be greater authorities to partner with organizations that can provide more flexibility and nimbleness. Sometimes it is unbelievable the number of forms you have to sign to volunteer in your park. So, partnering with the nonprofits makes it easier for folks to give back.

But I think most of our volunteers at Acadia just want to see the park well taken care of, well staffed, and feel good about their investment of volunteer time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. You mentioned that projects were undertaken to reduce the maintenance backlog, but they also created a "tremendous opportunity for visitor engagement and public benefit." What impact do you believe the maintenance backlog has had on the visitor experience and recreation opportunities in Acadia National Park? I know maintenance backlogs are an issue with all of our parks.

Mr. MACDONALD. In terms of the visitor experience, I would say the biggest impact is, as John mentioned, outdated facilities. Our visitor center at Acadia does come from that Mission 66 era. It is drastically undersized. It is hard to heat, it is hard to cool. It is inadequate for the 2.5 million visitors we get a year.

We have worked over the years to structure some of these public-private partnerships. Through endowments formed at Friends of Acadia, we have been able to address some of the backlog on iconic things, like trails and carriage roads, as you were mentioning. Some maintenance is sexy, and donors are proud to give to it; others are not. In terms of the visitor experience now, I would say it is the visitor center that is the primary hole; and the Park Service just does not even have that on the near horizon, to be able to repair that and keep it up.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Following up on that, what do you think about trails maintenance and maybe vegetation management? What would you be able to complete with new money from the Centennial Challenge Fund?

Mr. MACDONALD. Well, it would be wonderful to be able to plan for this kind of funding. I mean, again, this year we had to respond within a matter of a couple of weeks to the opportunity to compete for this \$10 million. We landed \$165,000 in Acadia. That was very helpful. We matched it and doubled it. That repaired less than a mile of a historic trail. It helped us restore a handful of scenic vistas. I mean this work is resource-intensive.

So, if this were a reliable source of funding, year in and year out, we would be able to work with the Park Service to program this

out and plan for it, and begin to bring down that backlog. Certainly, the Centennial Challenge Fund is not going to solve it, but it is an important supplementary tool to help add to philanthropy and help add to the kind of funding that I hope would come from the construction fund.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Director Jarvis, I was on a flight one time and I sat by a lady from Coca-Cola that ran an active trails grants program. I did not know about it before then. I know there has been a question about public and private partnerships, but what are you doing specifically with the National Park Foundation to engage corporate partners in the Centennial celebrations?

Mr. JARVIS. Thank you for that question. I think we are in a totally new place than we have been, probably for decades, in working directly with corporate sponsorships, with the National Park Foundation, with the leadership of Mr. Nau, and Will Shafroth, the CEO at the Foundation.

We have partnerships with Subaru, Disney, Budweiser, and American Express. We have new partnerships on the horizon, folks from major corporations like Red Bull and AirBNB coming in the door now to partner with the National Park Service, to help spread the word of Find Your Park, and support specific projects, like volunteerism.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Great, thank you.

Mr. Lowenthal.

Dr. LOWENTHAL. Thank you, Mr. Chair; and thank you to our witnesses for being here today. I also was very encouraged to see this, the National Park Service Centennial bill, the draft proposal that was put forth by Chairman Bishop, really begin to help the NPS address the challenges of the next 100 years. I really hope that the Majority works with the Minority on this bill to make what is now a good bill an even better bill, as they have begun to do already, as we have worked on other issues.

I also want to compliment, a little bit off the topic, the Majority for working with me and my staff on the BLM Foundation, which has a special mission we put in to clean up abandoned mines, as Mr. Hice has advocated for, and we are very pleased with them picking that up and wanting to work with us on it.

I want to continue on the discussion that has been raised by a number of people on our side of the aisle, which really talks about the stark differences in the funding levels. We have this tremendous range of potential in the draft versus the proposal that was put forth by Ranking Member Grijalva, in what the Park Service says it needs, and the levels that are actually provided in Chairman Bishop's bill. I know it is a draft proposal, and we are having that discussion. For me, it is really important to understand what that means, in terms of the actual backlog.

I know we have touched on this, Director Jarvis, but I would like to know if we end up with the low end, in terms of the funding, what are you going to prioritize? What would be included in specific projects if we had more robust funding? And, could you explain to us a little bit about how you arrive at those priorities?

Mr. JARVIS. The priorities are driven by life, health, and safety, at the very top of our priority list. We are in a triage situation, essentially, about what our priorities are with the current level of

instruction and repair/rehab funding. We go for the facilities that are high-priority assets. Those are the ones that are either of high historical significance, and/or directly related to the visitor experience. Those get the funding. Everything else goes into, essentially, almost a benign neglect status.

Then, we go in and Band-Aid for a facility. In the roads category, a perfect example is Memorial Bridge, right here in Washington, DC. We are Band-Aiding the Memorial Bridge, knowing that we will have a \$250 million bill at some point to repair the Memorial Bridge. So, that is the kind of triage that we are going through right now.

Dr. LOWENTHAL. In this discussion, it is really important for us to understand, and that is why I am glad you testified, just exactly what are the implications.

I think all of us agree to the overall concept. Now, the question is how do we fund it, and how to identify what is the appropriate level. I think that is the discussion, and it is very, very important for us to have that discussion. Thank you, and I yield back.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Great, thank you.

Mr. HICE.

Dr. HICE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I really appreciate the opportunity for this hearing on the "National Park Service Centennial Act," proposed by Chairman Bishop, and I want to thank each of our witnesses for being here.

Mr. Nau, I would like to direct my questions to you. Can you tell me specifically what the role is of the National Park Foundation in the Centennial?

Mr. NAU. The Foundation was enacted back in 1966, and we function as the 501(c)(3) to raise funding. Over the first 45 years, it has been pretty much philanthropy-driven. Through Director Jarvis' leadership, and the leadership of the Board of the Foundation, we have been able to expand into corporate partnerships and have increased the philanthropy. We work with the Park Service to address programmatic needs, and begin to deal with enhancing the visitor experience.

Corporate funding, right now, is at about \$45 million in 2015 and projected into 2016 is \$45 million, plus what comes in the door in the future that did not exist just 12 months ago.

Dr. HICE. So there is a good relationship between you and the Park Service? You are working well together?

Mr. NAU. Absolutely.

Dr. HICE. And I appreciate Mr. Westerman mentioning, and Director Jarvis, as well, the various corporations that are coming on board in an attempt to put together a public and private partnership. I understand that Coca-Cola Corporation is a major leader in that. And, of course, we are exceedingly honored to have Coca-Cola in my home state of Georgia; their leadership in so many ways has just been spectacular, and donating over \$1 million a year to the Foundation, as well, is tremendous.

But I want to jump on Director Jarvis' comments, and to you, Mr. Nau, are there incentives to attract more corporations to come on board?

Mr. NAU. The incentives are the visitors. If you go back and look at what I would consider to be the traditional funding model,

Federal funding, a little bit of philanthropy, what we are all addressing here today is what is the new funding model, going forward? The government has to be in—there has to be some philanthropy, there needs to be increased volunteerism, and the last one is corporate engagement. With the hundreds of thousands and millions of visitors that flow through these iconic parks, corporate America, particularly those that deal with consumer goods, are logical partners. And, as we have gone out to talk to them, they have responded tremendously.

I want to address one issue that has always come up. Corporate America wants recognition, but they do not want to overstate it within a park—be subtle. They do not want to be the ones to have pushback for too much recognition within a park. Again, I will say to Director Jarvis and the Service that the recognition that they have authorized in the parks right now with our sponsors helps us go out to other sponsors. Corporate America is going to be there, now that they know the Service would be a good partner for them.

Dr. HICE. You mentioned in your testimony that some people are concerned with the over-commercialization within some of the parks. Is there a way, as you just brought up, to tastefully recognize the corporations without overstepping the line of being overly commercialized? And, does this bill hit the balance?

Mr. NAU. Yes. On the balance issue, the answer is yes.

Dr. HICE. OK.

Mr. NAU. The governor there is not just the Park Service, it is the corporations. We do not want to overstate. If you go into many of the parks today, you will see signage on Find Your Park. Along the bottom are corporate logos, recognizing those partners that are engaged. That is all we want. That is all the recognition that corporations have asked for. So, there is a really good partnership dynamic going on.

Dr. HICE. Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, I will yield back with the comment that, with Coca-Cola's leadership, I encourage everyone to go drink a Coke today.

[Laughter.]

Dr. HICE. Thank you, and I yield back.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Thank you. Mr. Huffman.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for this important hearing. And thanks to our witnesses for the great work that you do for one of the great American institutions.

Mr. Jarvis, as we think about the Centennial Challenge, I know that Congress appropriated \$10 million in Fiscal Year 2015 for the Challenge. I wonder if you could tell us at what level the private sector responded and matched that investment.

Mr. JARVIS. Way more than one-to-one. I think it turned out to be about almost one-to-two, in terms of the private sector match with these projects.

Mr. HUFFMAN. All right. If we were to go big, let's say if that amount were raised to \$100 million a year, do you think there is enough interest from the private sector to match that level of investment by the Federal Government?

Mr. JARVIS. Absolutely. If you remember in 2008, Secretary Kempthorne asked Congress for funding for a similar centennial challenge, and we were able to receive pledges of over \$200 million



from the private sector and partners across the system to match a Federal match.

Mr. HUFFMAN. I would like to ask the same question to Mr. Nau.

In your opinion, do you think there is enough private interest in matching at the \$100 million level?

Mr. NAU. Short answer, absolutely. And, it is not just from corporations. It is going to come from individual and corporate philanthropy. As soon as that world knows that the Federal Government has skin in the game, it is going to open up doors, philanthropic and corporate giving, that we have not touched before.

Mr. HUFFMAN. All right. Thank you.

Director Jarvis, I want to ask you about high-speed broadband access as part of this important milestone for the Park Service. I know that you intend to install public Wi-Fi in visitor centers over the next year. That is a great step. Are there other goals that the Park Service has established for connectivity? And, I am wondering if there is a national or a park-specific planning process underway for that.

I am also, more specifically, curious about how our parks support the President's and Congress' vision of broadband deployment and access. And I mean not just getting our parks connected, I mean possibly using parks as anchors in remote rural areas to connect entire communities, or neighboring Federal agencies, or Federal health centers—lots of folks who, under the current system, are sort of siloed, sometimes each of them entering into their own contracts with telecoms for T1 lines at exorbitant rates, when right next door to them is another Federal facility or other facility that could be part of a regional consortium.

So, I am wondering if the Park Service is thinking creatively about breaking down those silos. I learned in a meeting a couple of weeks ago that there may be government contracting rules that prohibit the Park Service from bidding fiber contracts as part of a broader consortium, even with other Federal agencies, which makes no sense whatsoever to me.

I am curious about your thoughts on how we can not only get our parks connected, but really get our rural areas and other facilities, including Federal ones, connected as part of a cooperative effort.

Mr. JARVIS. I thank you for that question. Absolutely, we have both a goal and a plan to go forward to get connectivity into the primary visitor use areas of our national parks, with the target market being the Millennials. If they do not have connectivity, they are not going to come. I mean that is kind of our assessment.

We view that connectivity as an enhancement to the experience, not a substitute. So, at visitor centers, hotels, primary visitor use areas, we hope to build this kind of connectivity; and we are going to need to do it in partnership with communities, with the telecom industry, to drive these in. Often, we are at the tail end of miles of a single copper line. Recently we did a project, worked with some of our concessioners to look at satellite uplink in partnership with them to provide broadband access within concession facilities, as well.

I am unfamiliar with where there may be conflicts here, but that is definitely something I will be glad to look into to make sure that

we can work collaboratively with the other agencies and the private sector in some of these more remote locations.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Great, I would love to work with you on that. Thank you. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Thank you. Mr. Hardy.

Mr. HARDY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank Chairman Bishop for putting this draft bill forward. I think it helps us usher in the next century of national parks.

My district is home to some of the most distinctive units of the National Park System, including the Great Basin National Park, Death Valley National Park, as well as Lake Mead National Recreation Area, and the Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument. Together, those all generated about 5 million tourists last year.

First, a quick question that I came up with after listening for a minute, 5 million folks go to those parks, when Las Vegas itself had over 41 million visitors last year. We have dozens of other parks within a 100-mile radius of the Las Vegas area.

Mr. Nau, I would ask you, are 5 million folks a reasonable amount of people that should be using the parks, when you have 41 million visitors that close? You have Zion's National Park, the Grand Canyon National Park, and Bryce Canyon National Park, along with others. Is there an avenue there that we can continue to work on this?

Mr. NAU. Well, the numbers you are telling me, we have about a 12 percent penetration of visitors. I do not know what the specific standard ought to be. But the Find Your Park program is targeting the numbers that you just laid out. We want to be able to communicate with people and invite them to go to the parks.

Now, in this particular case, partnering with the hotel/motel association, the casino association in Vegas, and have them become that local partner to help communicate Find Your Park and address the idea of people going out to the dam, to the parks, on day trips, that is what the next generation of visitors are going to experience. These 3- and 4-hour day trips are what is going to drive Director Jarvis' numbers up.

So, the Foundation could go to Las Vegas, work with the hotel/motel association, and invite them to become a local partner. That is the way you are going to communicate with those visitors.

Mr. HARDY. Yes. The Las Vegas Valley, in the past, it used to be about \$.70 on every dollar was for gaming. Las Vegas has had to completely reinvent itself over the last 15 years. It is now less than \$.40 on the dollar for gaming; they are trying to bring people for shows and other activities. So, I think there is a real opportunity here, especially with as many parks as we have within that area.

Mr. NAU. Afterwards could I get the name of that convention and visitor's director? And we will approach them.

Mr. HARDY. Thank you. In my district, the Great Basin National Park has made efforts to reach out and expose new generations of Nevadans to our national treasures by bringing children from Title I schools from Clark County into the park and spending several days of experiencing the vast expanses of these one-of-a-kind landscapes. These students participate in the junior ranger

program, and film short videos to be included in the capsule commemorating the 30th anniversary of the Great Basin National Park and the Park Service for their Centennial.

Great Basin is also partnering with Death Valley and the Joshua Tree National Park to feature videos amongst our Nation's darkest areas, and you can see the Milky Way and other things out in that area.

With that being said, there is this collaboration with the fourth grade students and trying to give them free access. There are over 25,000 fourth graders in the Las Vegas Valley, and the *Las Vegas Review Journal* just reported only a couple hundred people have signed up for that program in the first quarter. Could you tell me, Director Jarvis, how this program is working over the rest of the country?

Mr. JARVIS. It is the first year of the program. I do not have the hard statistics off the top of my head now. At one point, we felt that we had about 900,000 downloads. There are roughly 4 million fourth graders in the Nation today. Our goal is to reach them all with the Every Kid in a Park voucher, which gives them free access to all parks and public lands for them and their family.

So, if you think of them as sort of a target market, we want to connect these kids to the outdoors through this pass. The National Park Foundation is key to this, in that they are raising the funding for transportation grants to the schools, so the kids can have a bus driver, a docent, and a substitute teacher to get out there, as well. It is a partnership program, and I think we are just sort of beginning to penetrate the broader school community around this.

We are not going to get them all this year, but our goal is to do this many years in a row.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Thank you.

Mr. HARDY. I know my time is up, but just one comment. These urban areas, and you cannot get more urban than Las Vegas, are the diverse areas that we need to bring people back to the parks. This is an important step that we have to take to get those young people out there. Thank you.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Beyer.

Mr. BEYER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman; and thank you all very much for being with us today.

Director Jarvis, we have heard a lot this year on this committee about the \$11 billion infrastructure backlog for the National Park Service. It has come up again and again, especially in light of the context of, do we spend more money for land acquisition when we have this \$11 billion backlog?

And, when you drill down, we find that roughly half of it is related to highways and other specific transportation infrastructure. The good news is that it looks like we are going to have a 5-year highway bill before we leave, the longest since 2005, with new funds. How much will this new highway bill affect your transportation backlog?

Mr. JARVIS. The transportation bill, as I understand it, that came out of conference has a National Park Service allocation of \$268 million for Fiscal Year 2016. That is going to grow to \$300 million in Fiscal Year 2020, which is a little bit more than we sort of currently have in our transportation program.

The good news, though, is it did create a major infrastructure competitive program of which the National Park Service will be able to compete for large infrastructure projects. The Memorial Bridge is an example of a project that could cost \$250 million. That would take our entire annual allocation for one project.

So, this is a good thing. We could certainly use more, but we feel wonderfully happy that the Congress has moved on a transportation bill, and we can plan out for 5 years on our road projects.

Mr. BEYER. Since you brought it up, Mr. Director, Arlington Memorial Bridge has two of the six lanes closed right now, the number-one access into Washington, DC. How are we making progress on those specific two-lane closures?

Mr. JARVIS. We have a project underway right now. It is a temporary fix. I commute across that bridge, too, so I know the backup of the traffic there every day. And I cannot give you a timeline; I will be glad to get back to you on when we expect to have those two lanes back open. But keep in mind this is only a temporary fix to the bridge.

Mr. BEYER. Great. Thank you very much. This bill increases the age applicable for the Public Land Corps from 25 to 30. Can you explain why that is? And should we have an exception for the under-30-year-old veterans coming back?

Mr. JARVIS. There are two aspects to the Public Land Corps: there is the age increase, and also the longer timeline. So, it goes from 120 days to 2 years that would make them noncompetitively eligible for Federal jobs.

A significant number of veterans are also in this program, and we have a number of initiatives that we work with Defense, Wounded Warriors, and others, to be able to reach vets as employees of the National Park Service, as well. So, they would be eligible under this.

The key is to give them a little bit longer time to achieve a Federal job, and we love hiring out of this program. The combination of increasing the age and going from 120 days to 2 years will allow us to really tap veterans, and the next generation, as new employees in the Service.

Mr. BEYER. I agree, thank you. One last question—in looking at the differences between Ranking Member Grijalva's bill and our Chairman's bill, one of the differences is in Title I, where the Grijalva bill talked about the Centennial Declaration giving the Park Service responsibility not just for the system, but for financial and technical assistance to states, communities, and individuals to protect our national heritage.

Do you see that as an important part of the mission, going forward, or is it OK to omit that?

Mr. JARVIS. I think it is a really important component. Over the 100-year life of the National Park Service, Congress has given the Park Service a variety of new responsibilities that really have nothing to do with the 409 units of the National Park System.

For instance, we manage the National Historic Landmarks Program, and the National Register of Historic Places Program. We do not manage those facilities, we do not provide them any funding, but we do the recognition. By recognizing that they are also part of the American story, this is what this Centennial Declaration

does. It says all the things that you do combine to help America celebrate who we are, as a Nation.

Mr. BEYER. Great. Thank you, Director Jarvis.

Mr. Chair, I yield back.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. LaHood.

Mr. LAHOOD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman; and I thank the witnesses for being here.

Director Jarvis, I have three sons that are 13, 11, and 9. We have been to Disney World and done that experience in the last 5 years, enjoyed that, and kind of saw how that process worked. But we have also done a number of trips to national parks. We have been to the north rim of the Grand Canyon and did a backpacking trip there, we did a fishing trip at Isle Royale, and we have also been to the Alaska Basin in the Teton National Park.

In comparing those experiences over the last 5 or 6 years with my sons, and looking at the technology and the apps that were used at Disney World, that technology increased the experience and the efficiency of that visit in everything from entering the park, tracking your location, charging food and water, and getting information in an effective and efficient way.

Looking at the statistics—Walt Disney World, in 1987, had 26 million visitors; this year they are going to have 50.1 million. They have doubled in size. I think there is a direct correlation between technology and apps and the efficiency of information. I compare that to our national parks and my own experience there, and how we can improve that.

I know you talked about connectivity, and I think that is part of it. But technology has to be a part of that, whether that is waiting in line for your entrance fee, getting supplies, campsite rentals, and lots of other issues that you can use to make that experience better with technology.

I know you have talked a little bit about that, but what specifically can we do to improve that? Because I think that issue has to be addressed if we want to improve our visitation.

Mr. JARVIS. I could not agree more. And I think your kids are a perfect example of this new generation that expects to be able to have that kind of access, to pay with their phones, to go a little deeper in.

The Park Service has a lot of content. We have a lot of stuff. We have a lot of stories. We have fantastic experiences. And probably, for our first 100 years, we have provided that as an authentic kind of experience. I think, with this next generation, we have to provide a technological aspect to that, as well. But to be very blunt about it, we are in a triage situation, as we have indicated here, from an operational budget standpoint and from an infrastructure standpoint. These kinds of things take money to invest in.

Now, we do have, in some cases, partnerships with the private sector, particularly corporate, who are interested in developing apps for us. One of them most recently was American Express, who is developing an app about volunteerism, where an individual can download the app and then basically participate as a volunteer, and then become incentivized, shall we say, to volunteer in their own services, as well.

What we have been trying to do is to build the content, and then ask the private sector to step up in developing the software, the applications, the user interfaces with our content, because, frankly, it is not our expertise to do that.

Mr. LAHOOD. Is there currently an application process out there? Are you entertaining from different technology companies somebody that can take over this process and get it going?

Mr. JARVIS. It is more on the individual, park by park, basis. For instance, here on the National Mall there was private sector development of Mall applications for tourism. There were applications during the civil rights marches. It is not centralized.

Mr. LAHOOD. Is it your thought that it is more efficient to do it that way, with each individual park doing it? Or is it better to do it in a more centralized approach throughout the Park Service?

Mr. JARVIS. I have never found anything centralized back here to be very efficient, to be blunt about it.

[Laughter.]

Mr. LAHOOD. I guess what I am saying is if you gave it to a private company to outsource that and run that for the entire Park Service, they could give you a good idea on that. Correct?

Mr. JARVIS. We have been, through the National Park Foundation, talking to Google, Facebook, and some of the other big social media organizations around these kinds of ideas. But, so far, we have not found sort of the right fit for this, Service-wide.

Mr. LAHOOD. Last question, just switching subjects on the transportation bill. In terms of money, if and when this bill passes and gets signed by the President, has that been prioritized within the Park Service on where that is going to be spent?

Mr. JARVIS. Yes, sir, we—

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. That is going to need to be a yes-or-no answer.

Mr. JARVIS. Yes.

[Laughter.]

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Thank you.

Mrs. Capps.

Mrs. CAPPS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing. Such a good topic. And thank you to each of our witnesses for your testimony.

My district, in the central coast of California, is home to some very beautiful landscapes. We all claim the fame of our areas that we represent. These landscapes that I represent stretch from the coastal mountains and the Carrizo Plain National Monument onshore to some very spectacular beaches along the coast.

We have the Channel Islands as the jewel, and Channel Islands National Park, which has been designated now for 35 years as a national park. It continues to attract visitors from all around the world. It is known as the Galapagos Islands of North America. It has preserved both the unique natural and cultural resources found within its borders, and ensured access for over 11 million visitors since its establishment. Each year, these visitors contribute tens of millions of dollars to our local economy, and support hundreds of jobs.

And, while visitors come to the Channel Islands for all sorts of reasons, there is a dedicated group that chooses to give back to the islands by volunteering. These volunteers staff the visitor center,

provide interpretation in the park, and conduct trail maintenance and preservation activities. I want to talk with a couple of you about our volunteers.

I know my experience in my district is not unique. National parks across the country are so invaluable to their local communities, and dedicated volunteers provide similar services that I have described in probably each of our national parks.

Director Jarvis, can you explain the importance of volunteers to the National Park Service? About how many did you have in 2015, if you have an idea? And why does the authorization cap of \$3.5 million need to be removed?

Mr. JARVIS. Thank you, Congresswoman, for that question. We could not provide the services and the quality of work to the American public through our national parks without our volunteers. It would absolutely be impossible. We have an extraordinary army of volunteers out there. This year we have set a new record. We had 440,000 volunteers.

Mrs. CAPPS. Wow.

Mr. JARVIS. We had set the goal to raise it significantly from what the previous year was, at 300,000. So we have gone 140,000 over our 300,000.

In the discussion draft, and in the Administration's bill, we are requesting the cap, which is currently under the appropriations bill, of \$5 million. Under authorization, it is \$3.5 million, but it was increased in the appropriations bill to \$5 million. We would like to have that cap removed, because that puts a ceiling on the amount of dollars that we can spend on supporting our volunteers.

The volunteers, depending on where you work, roughly cost the Park Service about \$10 to \$20 a piece to really support. They are not free, but they are quite inexpensive to support. And, the return we get is in the hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars of support, of direct work in our parks.

Mrs. CAPPS. Thank you very much.

Mr. MacDonald, you are the Executive Director of Friends of Acadia, a specific national park on the East Coast, or in Maine. I would imagine you know a thing or two about the importance of volunteers in your park. How do they assist in Acadia National Park?

Mr. MACDONALD. Thank you for recognizing this important role that they play. They assist in a number of ways. We have a program that is fairly unique; we call it our Drop-In Program. It is on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. If you are visiting Acadia with your family, you can drop in to volunteer. A lot of them are one-time volunteers, but that is over 3,000 hours a year, from the drop-ins.

We also have a dedicated corps of folks that this is just what they do. This is their job, almost. It is where they live, and it is their love. After all, the parks belong to them. They do not belong to the Service, the Service is managing them. The volunteers represent that ethic of ownership, investment, and pride in the parks. It is how we were founded. It is still a very important program. Friends of Acadia provides some funding to match what the Park Service can do with a volunteer coordinator. So, it is another version of a public-private partnership up in Acadia.

Mrs. CAPPS. Thank you. Just a real brief point, because my colleague asked about the Public Lands Corps Act, and he mentioned veterans and the role that they play.

Director Jarvis, can you say just a word about its ability to diversify your future work force?

Mr. JARVIS. Absolutely.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. The operative term being "a word."

Mrs. CAPPS. A word.

Mr. JARVIS. Yes.

[Laughter.]

Mr. JARVIS. We are growing a new generation of supporters that represent the diversity of the Nation.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Thank you.

Chairman Bishop.

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Nau, I appreciate your input and being here. You have mentioned in your testimony the support of the discussion draft that would establish overnight fees at lodging within the park boundaries.

In your mind, does that level the playing field between lodgings inside and outside, or does it skew it?

Mr. NAU. I do not know if it would "level the field" on individual parks, but it is going to get it a lot closer. Whether it is the town, the county, or the state, they all have overnight fees called hot taxes.

Mr. BISHOP. OK.

Mr. NAU. And I believe, from a businessman's perspective, those private sector investments are at a disadvantage, compared to the concessionaires that are not required to charge any kind of fee. They are exempted.

Mr. BISHOP. So, the Foundation would not see this as punitive to the lodging concessionaires?

Mr. NAU. Not at all. No, sir. I do not believe the businesses and communities would, either.

Mr. BISHOP. Let me hit you up on the Second Century Endowment concept. Is this important, that it is seeded with new fees? I mean why shouldn't we just fund it with philanthropic donations?

Mr. NAU. The donor community, in this case, people that I interact with and my own family, when we are going to invest philanthropically, I want to know that the owner or the manager has skin in the game. It is critical, I believe, to the donor community, as they estate plan over the next 20 years, that there be skin in the game from the Federal Government. This is one way to get it done.

Mr. BISHOP. That also hits up to the point of the idea that the Board of Directors of the Foundation would be in charge of investments with these funds. As the Board is presently constituted, is it chosen for its financial management expertise? And how do you ensure that these funds are going to be managed properly on behalf of the American people, going forward?

Mr. NAU. Great question. I have had the honor of serving on boards, in universities and the private sector. And those that have endowments do, in fact, have an investment committee, and you look to recruit people with that expertise. Since we have not had



it yet, there has not been a focus on recruitment of investment managers.

The irony of it is that, of the board right now, we have three of them. So, we could get into investment oversight. But, I would also say that no foundation board is going to manage its own investments. You are going to go out and hire an investment manager, and your board members, or the oversight committee, is going to work with that investment manager.

Mr. BISHOP. So, there would need to be changes to the charter of the Foundation. And, can only Congress do that?

Mr. NAU. Mr. Chairman, I do not know that it would require a change. A good board would see to it, itself. I do not know of any board on which I have been involved where it is required. I mean it is just good management, that you would have an investment oversight committee.

Mr. BISHOP. Can I just ask you—for battlefields, in which you have a passion and a concern, what apps have you been using on the battlefield?

Mr. NAU. Well, I really appreciate the issue. I believe the private sector, over development, is important. But right now is a bridge. 501(c)(3)'s can do it. I do not know if David's group has done one in Acadia, but the Civil War Trust has done one for almost all of the Civil War battlefields for the National Park Service. Local Friends groups have the capacity and the knowledge to create them. So, that is an easy way to bridge it.

Mr. BISHOP. I appreciate that. As you can see, I am not a Millennial, and I really don't care.

[Laughter.]

Mr. BISHOP. I just don't give a damn. But I am happy that somebody is working on that.

Let me say two last things. Director Jarvis, the Subcommittee Chair mentioned the issue of bottled water. Please do not overlook that. The ability of banning bottled water by allowing Gatorade and Coke cans and all the other stuff in there, it does not make a whole lot of sense, and it does not deem well for what we are looking at in the future. That is an issue you have to look at. I am sorry, this is silly.

Second, for the future, as we go forward with this, we are looking for ideas for this particular bill. Please do not give me any ideas that would require an offset, because I cannot find them. But any other ideas would be extremely helpful, and I would appreciate that.

I yield back; and I apologize, I am going to have to leave right now.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Gohmert.

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you, and I appreciate the witnesses being here, all of you, and your testimony.

Director Jarvis, earlier, to a question on this year's appropriations in the transportation bill, I understood you to say that the amount in the transportation bill is more than we "sort of currently have." I was wondering what you meant by "sort of currently have."

Mr. JARVIS. It is basically about \$15 million more annually, if I remember correctly, than we currently get out of the transportation program.

Mr. GOHMERT. Than you currently get?

Mr. JARVIS. Yes.

Mr. GOHMERT. OK, you just threw me with "sort of have."

Mr. JARVIS. Yes, but it is not a whole lot.

Mr. GOHMERT. I was not sure what that meant. OK. Do you know yet how much was spent in September and October of 2013 in renting or purchasing barricades and closing down all the facilities that the Park Service closed down?

Mr. JARVIS. No, sir, I do not know that number.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Nau, it is good to have you back again. I was curious, with your experience on the Park Board, are a board or board members allowed to reach out for corporate sponsors, or is that something that is exclusively left to the Park Service itself? How does that reach-out occur?

Mr. NAU. Actually, it is the contrary. It is not the Park Service, it is the Foundation.

Mr. GOHMERT. The Foundation.

Mr. NAU. Both the staff and individual board members reach out. For example, I reached out to Anheuser-Busch and to a couple of the others with whom we are still negotiating. So, it is going to be the private sector, through the Foundation Board, working with the Service. But the initial contact, in most cases, is coming from the Foundation.

Mr. GOHMERT. Well, I enjoy good apps. I am wondering if there is room for sponsors that would provide those apps. Is the Park Service director equipped adequately to provide those kind of apps, or is it just the Foundation that will be doing that?

Mr. NAU. I would look at it near term, and then long term. Near term, Friends groups and others like the Civil War Trust can create a fundamental, basic app to help the visitor understand what they are experiencing. Long term, I believe it will require the Service and the Foundation to identify the large private sector people that are going to be able to come in, improve the connection, the connectivity, and, at the same time, provide the type of apps that will appeal to these Millennials. But right now, it is Friends groups and others that are creating these apps.

Mr. GOHMERT. OK. Well, again, thank you for being here. Thanks for the work you do.

I was curious, Mr. MacDonald, are there apps that have been provided for your park?

Mr. MACDONALD. Yes, there are a couple that have come out of the private sector. Friends of Acadia is a resource and a partner for those private companies.

Mr. GOHMERT. When you say partner, how are they partnered?

Mr. MACDONALD. Well, they look to us for some of the content. They donate some of the proceeds back to the park. So, it is housed in the private sector, but very much a partnership with the Park Service and the Friends group.

Mr. GOHMERT. So are those apps purchased?

Mr. MACDONALD. No, they are free.

Mr. GOHMERT. They are free. So then the proceeds come from advertising?

Mr. MACDONALD. Correct.

Mr. GOHMERT. OK, all right. Well, thank you all very much.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Thank you. We are going to do one quick bonus round of questions, and I want to start with Director Jarvis.

Regarding the Centennial Challenge, could you give us some examples of projects that might be funded by that program?

Mr. JARVIS. What we have been trying to do with the Centennial Challenge Fund is to spread it broadly across the system. It can be a range from very small projects in the \$10,000, \$5,000 range, to multi-million-dollar projects.

Just from a process standpoint, we do a call out to the field. We put priorities on the maintenance backlog and on projects that help reduce the backlog, particularly projects that relate to connecting the next generation involving volunteers and youth. So, we sort of set a screen on that. Then, we select the partners that we know can produce the match on this, as well.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Would these funds be used for land acquisition?

Mr. JARVIS. No, not for land acquisition.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Nau, could you tell us about why there is a 5 percent cap on the endowment spending rate?

Mr. NAU. I am sorry, sir?

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. The legislation includes a 5 percent cap for spending of the endowment. The Park Service originally asked for 50 percent. Why such a low cap?

Mr. NAU. Well, the standard for endowment management is, over a 20-year period, there is an 8 percent return on traditionally-managed funds. The idea of putting a 5 percent cap is that it is a range that goes from about 4½ to 5½. In emergency years, you might go in and pull another percent out. But a 5 percent cap is what the industry standard would be. You do not spend up against the 8 percent, 20-year level.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. And, basically, that prevents the endowment from becoming exhausted, correct?

Mr. NAU. That is correct.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. OK. And that is standard for endowments of this type?

Mr. NAU. That is correct. By the way, you mentioned that 50 percent. I have never seen an endowment level spending of 50 percent. It is not an endowment any more.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Yes. Director Jarvis, looking at the NPS budget, again, it is up 16 percent over the past decade in nominal dollars after the prior decade, where it was up 65 percent. Inflation-adjusted, it is about flat even for the past decade, but there is a huge bulge in 2009 and 2010—up \$900 million in a single year, about a 35 percent increase.

The graph that the Ranking Member showed did not have that bulge reflected in the construction fund, so that raised a question. Where did that money go?

Mr. JARVIS. I cannot answer that off the top of my head. But I would be glad to come up and show you all the numbers later.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. That is a lot of money that was put into the Park budget in a single year. When it is not reflected in the construction numbers that the Ranking Member offered, that becomes a big problem for me. I would really like to know where that money went.

Mr. JARVIS. We would be glad to come up and show you those figures.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Great, thank you.

Mr. Nau, you talked about the need to engage the urban dwellers, Hispanics, and Millennials that have historically low park visitation rates. How do we do that? You have talked about, obviously, the connectivity for Millennials. How else do we get them into the parks?

Mr. NAU. The Find Your Park program, Mr. Chairman, is really a marketing effort. We have reached out to national media partners, both social and traditional. We have already begun a media program. We have partnered with the corporations that are paying fees. They are, in fact, converting a lot of their media.

If I were to name the stars that have lined up to help us, I don't think anybody in this room would recognize their names, because I sure did not. But they have really stepped up, and we have begun to get social media contacts, Mr. Chairman, the likes of which I wish I could get in my company's business. So it is working. And I believe, coming in the centennial year, we will begin to be able to clearly measure the impact, particularly on Millennials.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Well, I have no idea what social media means, but I am told it is quite significant.

[Laughter.]

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. One final question. Could we put up the overnight stays chart?

[Chart]

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Director Jarvis, that is the number of overnight stays at the national parks since 1979. Obviously, a significant decline from highs. In 9 seconds or less, what is driving that, and what are we going to do about it?

Mr. JARVIS. I think that my chart, which I have here and would be glad to share with you, is actually showing a turn. You can sort of see it there, in 2013 to 2014. But we are seeing a significant uptick in visitation, overnight stays, campground uses, starting in 2014 and beyond. And that, I think, is a direct result of the Find Your Park campaign and using social media to attract a new audience.

But, your point is well taken. For the last decade, it has been flat.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Well, we will leave it at my point was well taken.

[Laughter.]

Mr. JARVIS. But we are changing that.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Thank you. Ms. Tsongas.

Ms. TSONGAS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the complicated conversation we have had today, as we have explored the opportunities that come through philanthropy and private contributions, and the ways in which the draft legislation seeks to take advantage of that.

Looking at the way in which the Centennial Challenge has been structured in the draft legislation, it really will be funded by whatever dollars are raised by the increase in the senior fee. And that, in and of itself, there are questions around. Presuming that it goes forward as it is currently drafted, that could roughly generate about \$35 million, which would then have to be met, dollar for dollar, by private contributions.

My question really goes, though, more to the proposed legislation from Mr. Grijalva, which would put in place \$100 million for 3 years. It is a set amount for 3 years, in each year. So, it is \$100 million in each year. It is a set amount, which seems to be to maximize the opportunity to raise private dollars. You know that you have this set-aside from the Federal Government, and now it tasks you, the Park Service, to go out and raise the private match.

My thoughts from you, Mr. Nau, for somebody who has been in the business of private fundraising, are we missing an opportunity by not setting aside a set amount, given what you have been saying about those of us, the Baby Boomers, who are looking at estate planning, your own knowledge of how private individuals give, or even the corporate world, as it makes decisions?

Are we missing an opportunity by not setting aside a set amount, and taking advantage of the Centennial to make it larger?

Mr. NAU. Obviously, if you put more money into any kind of a program, the ROI is going to increase, particularly for the local communities that are at the parks.

The opportunity presented by the Centennial, ma'am, would allow us to craft that private sector engagement in the Centennial Challenge. That is the way that will help us, at the Foundation and the local Friends groups, to go out and begin to generate the kind of matches that we need to.

The way it is crafted, the dollar level is up to you all. But the way it is crafted, we need to have that kind of challenge grant. David said that in his opening comments. That will help generate significant private sector and corporate money.

Ms. TSONGAS. I appreciate Chairman Bishop's concern with finding offsets. But, given the unique times we are in, and that we are celebrating 100 years, it is a missed opportunity to not maximize for private investment.

But we also know that private investment cannot take the place of the Federal responsibility, and that we cannot use private fundraising to somehow relieve our obligation to really focus on what the Federal Government should be doing.

Director Jarvis, there has been a 7 percent influx in visitors to the national parks in 2014. I would expect that visitation will continue to increase as the Centennial nears. I have seen the Every Kid in a Park program. I have seen how wonderful it is for those fourth graders and their families, as they are presented with this visitors pass, the excitement that they have that their families will be able to take advantage of this.

But if that is the case, and we do confront robust increases in visitation, do you believe the parks are prepared to receive these increased numbers of visitors, given the cuts in the National Park Service budget over the last several years? And how does this draft

bill, and the bill introduced by Ranking Member Grijalva, help address the needs of the park?

Mr. JARVIS. I think we are on pace to set a record, in terms of visitation for this year. I think it will be even larger next year, with all of the attention that is being brought to the National Park System.

It is stressing out the national parks and the staffs. I have been out in the field throughout this year, and talking to park superintendents and rangers on the ground. We are seeing a large influx of new international visitors, particularly from China and that part of the world. We are seeing more incidents that we have to respond to: search and rescue, emergency medical, those kinds of things.

The Fiscal Year 2016 budget requested operational support, as well as these infrastructure investments. We would hope that Congress would provide both, so that we can be prepared to receive the number of visitors we expect in 2016.

Ms. TSONGAS. Thank you. My time is up. Thank you for being here.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Thank you. Mrs. Lummis.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Before I ask Director Jarvis some questions, I do want to thank you, Mr. Nau, for your work on the Foundation Board, and your long-standing commitment to our national parks. It is exemplary. I hope there are many more clones of your work in the future.

Director Jarvis, I have a question about what appears to be a difference between the Bishop discussion draft and the Grijalva bill related to the Visitor Service Management Authority. Is this authority meant to work alongside the 1998 concessions law, or is it meant to replace it?

Mr. JARVIS. It is to work alongside the 1998 concessions law.

Mrs. LUMMIS. OK. I am curious about how they would interact. In fact, wouldn't it be easier to just revisit the 1998 law, instead of creating a new authority? Why not integrate the two, instead of creating a parallel universe here?

Mr. JARVIS. I think what we ultimately would like to do is to work with you to amend the 1998 law. But I do not think we are ready. We want to try some new models that are more consistent with the private sector models, particularly lodging and food service, and then bring to you the results of that so that we can amend the 1998 law in a way that would both provide an opportunity for the private sector to invest, which would allow the Service to upgrade its facilities, and provide the kind of experience that the public expects in our second century. But I, frankly, do not think we are ready to make those tweaks yet.

Mrs. LUMMIS. You see the need for a different model. Correct?

Mr. JARVIS. I see the need for an adjustment to the existing model.

Mrs. LUMMIS. OK.

Mr. JARVIS. Very much so.

Mrs. LUMMIS. OK. What would that adjustment be?

Mr. JARVIS. So, for instance, let's just take the leaseholder surrender interest component that is in the current 1998 law. That creates, essentially, upside-down contracts. It creates a contract where a new competitive bid coming in would have to put up a

significant amount of capital, in some cases over \$100 million, in order to be the new concessioner. Even though the goal of the 1998 law was to create competition, the leaseholder surrender interest actually creates a noncompetitive environment.

We need a new model to allow, obviously, the private sector to get a return on their investment. But this model, that was created in 1998, really is problematic for us in the long term, and it has resulted in a really small group of concessioners out there that understand this enough to compete in that environment.

It is a one-size-fits-all law. We are using the same set of parameters without any negotiation for the Grand Canyon and a very small lodge in Glacier Bay, or a marina in Lake Mead. We need a broader range of tools to be able to provide these kinds of services, work with the private sector, but also be able to upgrade them to meet current standards. The current law does not do that.

Mrs. LUMMIS. OK, thanks. That helped me understand where you are heading with this.

I am going to switch to the senior pass. The price of a lifetime senior pass was established at \$10 in 1994. Currently, you support, as I understand it, increasing the price of the pass to match the current annual parks pass. Can you explain why you support that increase?

Mr. JARVIS. Well, I have to say, and I am a current holder of the \$10 senior lifetime pass. It is about the price of a cup of coffee and a muffin at Starbucks.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Right, yes.

Mr. JARVIS. I have yet to meet anyone that felt that that was an appropriate cost for a lifetime pass, including many, many, many seniors. We still think that seniors should get a lifetime pass. By pegging it to the current America the Beautiful Pass, which is, frankly, a deal itself at \$80, we think we will not only generate a new source of revenue for us to reinvest in the national parks, but also make it available to a generation that can afford an \$80 pass one time.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Yes.

Mr. JARVIS. And I have talked to various senior groups, including AARP, and they are supportive of this concept.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Great.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Hardy.

Mr. HARDY. Thank you. Mr. Jarvis, as you know, in October, Scotty's Castle in Death Valley had a flash flood that basically has put the project in jeopardy of staying closed until it gets repaired. It generates about \$550,000 a year and close to 120,000 people visit. This will cause \$50 million in damage over the whole entire park.

Can the Centennial Challenge endowment funds be used on those types of projects?

Mr. JARVIS. First of all, let me just say, yes, it was extraordinary damage. And, by the way, the state of Nevada was an extraordinarily supportive partner there, in responding to that.

The transportation funds that are in the transportation bill would definitely be used. We have, within the Park Service transportation program, as well as our line item, what we call

emergency repair funds. So, they would be the initial funds that would go to this.

In terms of specific things like Scotty's Castle and the collection, those are absolutely appropriate investments from the Centennial Fund that are in this bill.

Mr. HARDY. OK, I am going to ask a little more difficult and challenging question of you. I had the experience of being a Director of Public Works for about 7 years for a city. I also had the experience of being a City Councilman for two terms. Through that process, whenever we created a park, opened a recreation center, or did anything along those lines of trying to create that better environment and better opportunity, I made sure, or my other adjoining councilmen always made sure that we had the funds. Are we able to finance that, and maintain that at its highest standard, through future budgets?

Tell me if you go through the same analysis at this Federal level when you do projects. How do you maintain things if you use capital dollars to grow the project? It appears to me there is a challenge of not looking down the road to the future to see how we can take care of it on the existing dollars we have. You just cannot keep going back to the taxpayer to continue to increase taxes to pay for things. Is that happening at this Federal level?

Mr. JARVIS. Well, analogous to your experience with parks or facilities that were developed, you would have to go to the City Council to receive some support to do that and also use some user fees. That is exactly the situation we are in, as well. We are using our user fees to support that as much as we possibly can. At the same time, we need Federal support from the taxpayer, from the Appropriations Committee, in order to support these facilities.

We are not building any new visitor centers. We are in a triage situation of basically not building new facilities across the system, unless somebody else is paying for it, because we just do not have the resources to do that.

Mr. HARDY. There seems to be a trend over the last 30 years, through the Antiquities Act, that national monuments continue to grow and continue to be basically dumped on the Park Service without the funding coming forward. Has that been part of the challenge? Maybe some of these national monuments that we continue to create may not be able to pay for themselves?

Mr. JARVIS. Well, I will say that every year there are proposals for new parks, both before the Congress and before the Administration. I would say the Park Service attempts to oppose a significant number of those because we cannot take care of them. When they are presented to us, we really work hard to minimize our responsibilities, make our footprint as small as possible, take on no new facilities, and see if there is a partner that can step up.

Mr. HARDY. I guess what I am leading to is could that be part of the cause of the backlog?

Mr. JARVIS. It adds to the backlog, but the backlog principally is our older infrastructure that was built in the 1960s and 1970s.

Mr. HARDY. Because at the Federal level, in my opinion, we do not look forward to see what it is going to cost to take care of things and budget for the maintenance after you do a capital project.



Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Great. Thank you. I want to thank all of our witnesses for their testimony today. As the Chairman said, this is labeled a draft for a reason; it is a work in progress. Now is the time for anyone with ideas on bolstering the parks in the centennial year to come forward with them. I appreciate all of the suggestions that you have offered today.

We may have additional questions. We will keep the record open for 10 days to receive answers to those questions.

With that, if there is no further business before the subcommittee, the subcommittee will stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:04 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

[ADDITIONAL MATERIALS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DERRICK A. CRANDALL, COUNSELOR, NATIONAL PARK  
HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. Chairman and Members, the National Park Hospitality Association (NPHA) offers this testimony regarding the discussion draft of the “National Park Service Centennial Act.” NPHA is both enthusiastic about and actively engaged in activities associated with the Centennial of the National Park Service. The role of this agency in protecting and supporting the enjoyment of the special legacy of America’s more than 400 park units is important and appreciated by the public.

We applaud and share the interest of the Congress in using the Centennial as a time to assess and improve the tools available to operate our park units. We are especially proud of the role we played, in concert with the Bipartisan Policy Center and the National Parks Conservation Association, in 2013 at a Bridgebuilder session examining Sustainable Supplementary Funding for America’s National Parks. We offered 16 white papers for congressional and agency consideration, from a new Penny for Parks increase in Federal motorfuel taxes to provide better public access to the Great Outdoors to changes which would allow historic tax credits for investments in qualifying sites in parks.

Concessioners have served park visitors since the 1870s and today serve some 100 million park visitors annually in approximately 120 park units. NPHA members have a combined workforce of nearly 25,000 persons, mostly front-line, visitor contact jobs, and provide in excess of \$1 billion in goods and services to visitors annually. Concessioner franchise payments to NPS are more than \$100 million annually. Concessioner marketing and promotion efforts total more than \$20 million annually, and are coordinated with marketing and promotion efforts of states and gateway communities that equal that amount. Concessioners are leading efforts to promote the National Park System to all Americans. Visitation to parks has been flat over the past three decades, and has actually declined if you discount new units added to the system. Most importantly, concessioners are committed to meeting America’s needs—needs for healthier lifestyles, for better and lifelong educational opportunities, for strong local and regional economies that can sustain and protect our parks and for connecting all Americans across differences in regions, ages, income and ethnicity.

We applaud efforts to enact meaningful NPS Centennial legislation. The discussion draft provides the means to invite and challenge individual and organizational donors—by leveraging the impact of their contributions. This is a proven strategy for parks and philanthropy in general. Several of our members were involved in an initial and successful Centennial Challenge effort mounted under then-Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne.

We further support the concept of an endowment for our parks, although we believe that the mammoth backlog in deferred maintenance is of such urgency that we cannot support diversion of fees and other current funding streams away from critical current operational needs.

Based upon our knowledge about visitation to America's national parks, we offer the following specific suggestions:

1. We strongly support the purpose statement of the Discussion Draft:  
To prepare the National Park Service for its Centennial in 2016 and for a second century of promoting and protecting the natural, historic, and cultural resources of our National Parks for the enjoyment of present and future generations, and for other purposes.
2. We recommend a replacement in the funding stream proposed for the endowment account established under the National Park Foundation. The proposed 5 percent tax on lodging within national parks should not be adopted for several important reasons. First, it would alter the comparability provisions for the pricing of lodging in parks established under the 1998 concessions law. Second, the tax would be paid by a very small portion of all park visitors and would yield no responsive benefits to those paying the tax. Third, the tax could be a real deterrent to efforts to attract visitors to parks during shoulder seasons, undermining important streams of revenue to the agency from entrance fees and franchise fees that are key to operations and maintenance. Fourth, the addition of a new Federal tax on state and county sales and tourism taxes, utility pass-through charges and more is likely to have a chilling effect on the guest donation program—again, an important source of support for park programs and projects today and an important opportunity for expansion as a funding strategy once needed revisions are made to NPS Directors Order 21. And fifth, the administration of this tax will be a challenge and the transfer of the tax to a non-Federal entity raises a variety of issues.  
Instead, we suggest that the committee add a Centennial Park Entrance Fee Surcharge of \$1 on all existing entrance fees—whether for vehicles or per person. We believe that this would be a fair and appropriate means to raise revenues of at least \$10 million annually. We also believe that park visitors can be told about the surcharge in a way that will yield support, and perhaps interest in additional actions to support parks.
3. We enthusiastically support the continuation and expansion of the Centennial Challenge Program. Encouraging nonprofits, corporations and individuals to contribute toward important national park programs and projects is a vital part of a long-term strategy for keeping America's parks relevant and well-functioning.
4. We support the proposal to authorize an appropriation of up to \$25 million annually for the National Park Foundation. We strongly support the Foundation's Centennial efforts, including leadership of the Find Your Park Campaign, to make our national park system relevant, enjoyed and supported. We support continuing outreach efforts after the Centennial. We think appropriated general funding, and other sources including resource mitigation and penalty funds, can dramatically increase available park resources.
5. We urge the committee to act outside of the discussion draft to support creation of a Centennial Penny for Parks Federal motorfuel excise tax surcharge. We are attaching our letter to the Chairman of the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure and Ways and Means that further outlines this concept. The significant revenues associated with this program would allow elimination of the large and growing backlog in transportation-related investment needs in national parks and other federally managed lands within a decade and could underwrite innovative ways to improve accessibility of our Great Outdoors to all Americans.
6. We support the addition of a new title to the discussion draft. We suggest use of this description: Visitor Outreach and Experience Improvement Program. For decades, national parks offered the leading example of use of private capital to support public agency efforts. Investments by concessioners since the early 1900s have produced a remarkable set of treasured structures that are world-renowned. From Yosemite Valley to the Grand Canyon, from Grand Teton to Glacier, from Acadia to the Blue Ridge Parkway, lodges and restaurants and stores and marinas have been built with private capital—and are now some of the most prized elements of our National Register of Historic Places. We now see a similar pattern of public/private partnerships emerging in transportation and other programs. The National Park Service can and

should build upon this wonderful tradition in its second century, guided and encouraged by new congressional direction in the Centennial Act.

Specifically, we urge this new title to include direction to attract needed investment from concessioners to expand and improve visitor services in parks, including through modernization of lodges, campgrounds and marinas. Part of this modernization will depend upon new flexibility by the agency, including authority to issue concessions contracts of up to 40 years—a provision that should permit eligibility for historic tax credits by concessioners and thus boost the attractiveness of significant investments that can permit existing and iconic structures to be functional and efficient and modernized to incorporate best practices in design. Improved visitor experiences will also result from extension of operating hours and seasons and encouragement of the transfer of existing campgrounds to concessioner operations which will offer more diverse overnight options, serve more visitors and generate new revenues for the agency.

We would also support experimentation with new models for public-private partnerships, especially for park units that now receive low visitation and/or have inadequate visitor services to accommodate greater visitation. We have suggested that NPS experiment with leases and nonappropriated funding instrumentalities over the next decade, and support congressional authority for up to 10 pilot efforts which supplement, but do not compete with or replace, the agency's current concessions contracts and authorities.

7. We ask the Congress to support NPS efforts to promote visitation of national parks, a core mission of the agency established under its 1916 organic act: *"The service thus established shall promote and regulate the use of the Federal areas known as national parks, monuments, and reservations . . ."*

Promotion efforts of the agency flourished during its initial 50 years of operations, including hosting the original U.S. Travel Bureau. In order to revitalize this core program, we urge the Congress to specifically authorize the use of up to 10 percent of the franchise fees paid by national park concessioners annually to support NPS outreach and marketing efforts in partnership with states, gateway communities and concessioners. We believe that outreach and promotion efforts will increase collection of park entrance and recreation fees sufficiently to underwrite both improvements in visitor experiences and specific efforts, including fee-free days, to successfully invite non-traditional park visitors. There are numerous examples of isolated and successful cooperative efforts now underway, including shared interpretive costs and outreach to international visitors through Federal Row at IPW, which could be made commonplace.

Most concessioner franchise fees are retained in the park generating those fees—80 percent of all franchise fees are used locally. The remaining 20 percent are used at the discretion of the NPS Director. We urge incorporation in the Centennial Act of a new National Park Outreach and Promotion Fund and the following funding strategy:

*"Up to 10 percent of the concessioner franchise fees collected by the agency each year may be used to support agency outreach and marketing programs designed to connect all Americans to their parks, and especially those portions of the American public under-represented among current park visitors. Nothing in this provision, however, shall authorize any change in the use of concessioner franchise fees retained by the park generating the fees. Outreach and marketing programs shall be undertaken in cooperation with state and regional DMOs and NPS concessioners, and shall require not less than 1:1 matching of Federal funds."*

8. We support increased use of conservation corps in national parks. Concessioners in Shenandoah National Park, Yellowstone National Park and other units are utilizing youth conservation corps to undertake construction, reconstruction and maintenance projects which replicate many of the successes of the Civilian Conservation Corps Program of the 1930s, including connecting urban youth to parks. Pilot projects have shown that use of conservation corps can also actually reduce project costs. Direction by the Congress in the Centennial Act would aid in expanding use of conservation corps in parks, working cooperatively with The Corps Network, the National Trust for Historic Preservation and concessioners, reducing the barrier of current Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) and more.

Mr. Chairman and Members, we know you would agree that we need to get Americans back in touch with nature, engaged in physical activities and outdoor recreation, and connected to the magnificent culture, heritage and landscapes that are celebrated by our National Park System. We need to reach out to youth to encourage them to share in the wonder and enjoyment of our national parks and discourage the increasingly sedentary lifestyles that are contributing to our health care crisis. We need to expand park visitation to encourage minorities, disadvantaged communities, new Americans and urban residents to see their national parks for themselves and to build a broader constituency for America's Great Outdoors. And, we need to find new and innovative ways to reinvest in the maintenance, restoration, and expansion of critical park infrastructure—much of which was built either by private investment when the national parks were first created, or in conjunction with the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps more than half a century ago.

The National Park Hospitality Association and the National Park concessioners want to help you, the National Park Service, and all Americans in achieving these objectives. As the 100th Anniversary of the National Park Service shines a light on America's Best Idea, we hope you will help us build on our long-standing partnership with the NPS to find new and innovative ways to improve the parks and create a new generation of Americans who share in the wonder of this amazing legacy.

We thank you for considering this testimony.

Attachment

#### ATTACHMENT

NATIONAL PARK HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION  
WASHINGTON, DC

December 1, 2015

Hon. Bill Shuster, Chairman  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Hon. Kevin Brady, Chairman  
Committee on Ways and Means  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Shuster and Brady:

We are writing to urge your personal support in capitalizing on important opportunities and national needs regarding the transportation infrastructure of our nation's national parks and other legacy Great Outdoors areas. The National Park Service will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2016—a wonderful testimonial to bipartisan leadership to protect special natural and historic sites across our nation and to use these sites to tell some of our greatest stories. Our national parks and other public lands—including national forests and national wildlife refuges and more—attract more than a billion visits annually. But these special places are in trouble.

Nearly one-third of our nation is managed by federal agencies ranging from the National Park Service to the Forest Service, from the Bureau of Land Management to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. These lands are vital to the nation for many reasons and certainly for their importance to recreation and tourism. Recreation expenditures in this country total more than \$650 billion annually. To demonstrate the importance of federal lands, consider just three numbers:

- 1) national park **concessioners provide more than \$1.4 billion in lodging, food, transportation and other services to tens of millions of visitors to national parks** annually, employing 25,000 persons;
- 2) key sectors of the recreation community are especially reliant on these lands and waters. **More than 60% of all downhill skiing occurs at ski areas in national forests;** and
- 3) the national strategy to dramatically boost tourism to the USA, essential to achieving a better balance of trade, relies significantly on America's Great Outdoors, according to Brand USA, the Congressionally chartered corporation charged with **growing inbound visitors from 60 million in 2011 to 100 million in 2021.**

The condition of infrastructure on federally-managed lands is bleak. Key forest roads essential to reaching campgrounds, river access points and trailheads are no longer safe for passenger cars. Our iconic National Park System, less than a year from its managing agency's Centennial, has a backlog of deferred maintenance of nearly \$12 billion in road, water system, dams and structures and has virtually no plans to expand its capability to serve our growing population. Other key agencies, including the Forest Service, also have backlogs of deferred maintenance totaling in the billions of dollars, and are actually closing roads and reducing public access.

Unlike virtually all other public roads in America, roads on America's public lands receive no support from the state motorfuel tax levied on gasoline sold at the retail level. For the estimated four million miles of interstates, primary and secondary routes, these state taxes fund 20% of road construction and reconstruction and nearly all maintenance and operations. Yet roads vital to Americans seeking to access campgrounds, trailheads, beaches and to reach rivers and lakes on federal lands depend upon appropriated federal dollars from the beleaguered domestic discretionary pot for operation and maintenance, contrasting with most public roads in the nation which qualify for 80% federal funding for construction and then use of state motorfuel revenues for operation and maintenance.

The solution is simple. The nation needs to add a **Penny for Parks** to its federal motorfuel tax rate for the next decade, a tax which would acknowledge the federal responsibility for accessing our nation's parks and other public lands. This funding would end the competition road operations and maintenance now pose to federal recreation and conservation programs in the annual appropriations process. Adopting this supplemental tax for a ten year period would allow continued and improved safe access by Americans to their public lands.

We believe that action on **Penny for Parks** in recognition of the National Park Service Centennial would enjoy broad support among the nation's recreation, tourism, conservation and transportation communities. We invite your leadership on this matter and commit to urging these communities to support your actions.

Sincerely,

DERRICK A. CRANDALL,  
*Counselor.*

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ASSOCIATION OF PARTNERS FOR PUBLIC LANDS,  
SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND.

December 1, 2015

Hon. TOM MCCLINTOCK, *Chairman,*  
Hon. NIKI TSONGAS, *Ranking Member,*  
*House Committee on Natural Resources,*  
*Subcommittee on Federal Lands,*  
*Washington, DC 20515.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCCLINTOCK AND RANKING MEMBER TSONGAS:

The National Park Service (NPS) Centennial in 2016 has the potential to be a catalytic moment in the history of America's public lands and their partnerships with nonprofit organizations. The discussion draft of the National Park Service Centennial Act presented by Chairman Bishop clearly recognizes the centrality of private philanthropy and a vital network of nonprofit park partners in developing sustainable solutions for improving our parks and enhancing the visitor experience.

Since 1977, the Association of Partners for Public Lands (APPL) has been the national voice for the nonprofit partners of America's public lands, providing critical training to improve their effectiveness and magnify their impact. Our members are nearly 100 friends groups, cooperating associations, educational institutes and other nonprofit partners of America's public lands. Our members range in scale from the all-volunteer Friends of the Klondike Gold Rush to Eastern National, a cooperating association partnering with over 160 national parks, and the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy which has alone provided more than \$350 million in park support.

APPL member organizations are operational partners in more than 340 of the 409 national park units. Our members staff most visitor centers, provide interpretive materials, offer educational programs and give back through grants and other partnerships. Not only do APPL members save federal funds by providing these services, but they provide more than \$150 million annually in aid to the NPS through major projects, grants, programs and services that respond to the agency's priorities.

We are grateful that you have called upon two of our member organizations—the Friends of Acadia and the National Park Foundation—to share how this legislation will positively impact efforts in the field and among national partners. In this context, we offer a few thoughts about the implications of the legislation for the broader community of nonprofit organizations that APPL represents.

#### **NATIONAL PARK CENTENNIAL CHALLENGE FUND (TITLE I)**

APPL enthusiastically supports the discussion drafts creation of a permanent Centennial Challenge Fund with a dedicated federal funding stream. We view as a key strategy for enhancing America's national parks in their second century.

For almost 10 years, bipartisan enthusiasm for the Centennial Challenge idea has provided federal dollars that have been leveraged by significant private contributions to enhance our national parks. David MacDonald of the Friends of Acadia will speak eloquently to the ways that his organization has tackled specific deferred maintenance projects that could excite donors. Across the country, several APPL members are among the 90 private organizations demonstrating the value of the Centennial Challenge in 2015, contributing significantly to the almost \$16 million in donations that are matching \$10 million in federal funding. These members include:

- Yosemite Conservancy is rehabilitating and restoring the Mariposa Grove of Sequoia Trees. The project improves hydrology related to roads and trails to benefit the giant sequoias, enhances safety and traffic flow, adds new accessible parking spaces and restores 3.93 acres of giant sequoia and wetland habitats.
- Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation is repairing and restoring historic structures at Johnson Farm and making walkways in Price Park Campground accessible to all visitors.
- Grand Canyon Association is enhancing a one mile segment of the Bright Angel Trail, one of the most popular used by visitors to reach the Colorado River.

The discussion draft importantly builds on this tradition by establishing a sustainable public-private philanthropic opportunity wherein federal dollars are matched at a minimum of one-to-one by donations. By seeding the federal commitment with a much needed increase in the price of the Senior Pass, the proposed legislation enables the NPS and its nonprofit partners to plan and think big. Nonprofit partners who can share the guarantee of a future federal match with their donors and constituents will be better positioned to attract greater philanthropy and aid—especially smaller organizations that lack sizable philanthropic bases in their gateway communities.

The Centennial Challenge Fund is founded on the concept that parks and their visitors will benefit by leveraging public and private investment. Nonprofit park partners have resources, skills and expertise that the NPS may not have, and these too should be leveraged in the Challenge. We are concerned that the discussion draft requires all funds to flow through the federal treasury. There are times when dollars can be further leveraged by enabling the nonprofit partner to manage or provide a signature project or program. Additionally, some foundations will not permit their funds to be sent to government entities.

APPL would welcome the opportunity to work with the Subcommittee to empower nonprofit park partners to have a larger role in the delivery of signature projects and programs while maintaining the highest standards of accountability and transparency. Further, we are eager to work with the Subcommittee to identify additional funding streams for the Centennial Challenge Fund.

#### **NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION ENDOWMENT (TITLE II and V)**

APPL applauds the creation of a National Park Foundation Endowment as a long term investment in the national park system and a legacy of this Congress. The prospect of an endowment will provide a new avenue for philanthropic park support and we appreciate the National Park Foundation's willingness to steward such an important effort. We also applaud the Chairman's requirement that the endowment

function as a traditional endowment would by using only 5% of its funds annually for projects, thus increasing the likelihood of growing a substantial corpus.

We join the National Park Foundation in strongly supporting the amendments to the organization's Congressional charter that reconfigures its board leadership. The result will be a model that has been successfully employed by many nonprofit park partners.

### **NATIONAL PARK NEXT GENERATION STEWARDS (TITLE III)**

APPL commends the inclusion of authorities that highlight the educational mission of the NPS, expand opportunities for millennials to join the conservation workforce through the National Park Service and other land management agencies, and increase funding available to the Volunteer-in-Parks program. Collectively, these authorities provide the NPS with more tools to work with their nonprofit park partners in serving a diverse and growing public.

The Chairman has provided a compelling road map for Congress to consider its role in marking the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. APPL is eager to work with the Subcommittee to further refine the discussion draft so that we continue to develop new opportunities for nonprofit park partners in this second century of preservation and enjoyment.

We thank you for your consideration of our views and recommendations.

Sincerely,

*Jerryne Cole,*  
President, APPL Board of Directors,  
Vice President, Denali National Park  
Wilderness Centers, AK.

*Diana Nielsen Saathoff,*  
Government Relations Committee  
Chair, APPL Board of Directors,  
Executive Director, Mount Rushmore  
Society, SD.

*Dan Puskar,*  
Executive Director,  
Association of Partners for Public  
Lands, MD.

### **ASSOCIATION OF PARTNERS FOR PUBLIC LANDS: MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS THAT PARTNER WITH THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

Adventures and Scientists for Conservation	Great Smoky Mountains Association
Alaska Geographic	Harpers Ferry Historical Association
Badlands Natural History Association	Hawai'i Pacific Parks Association
Big Bend Conservancy	Intermountain Natural History Association
Big Bend Natural History Association	Isle Royale & Keweenaw Parks Association
Black Hills Parks and Forests Association	Jamaica Bay-Rockaway Parks Conservancy
Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation	Jefferson National Parks Association
Bryce Canyon Natural History Association	Joshua Tree National Park Association
Cabrillo National Monument Foundation	Lassen Association

Canyonlands Natural History Association	Lewis & Clark National Park Association
Capitol Reef Natural History Association	Manzanar History Association
Carlsbad Caverns Guadalupe Mountains Assoc.	Mesa Verde Museum Association
Carver Birthplace Association	Mississippi Park Connection
Colorado National Monument Association	Mount Rushmore Society
Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park	National Association for Interpretation
Crater Lake Natural History Association	National First Ladies' Library
Craters of the Moon Natural History Association	National Park Foundation
Death Valley Natural History Association	National Parks Conservation Association
Devils Tower Natural History Association	Ocmulgee National Monument Association
Discover Your Northwest	Pacific Historic Parks
Eastern National	Petrified Forest Museum Association
Everglades Association	Point Reyes National Seashore Association
Fort Laramie Historical Association	Protectors of Tule Springs
Friends of Acadia	Public Lands Institute, University of Las Vegas
Friends of Aztec Ruins National Monument	Redwood Parks Association
Friends of the Blue Ridge Parkway	Rocky Mountain Conservancy
Friends of Great Smoky Mountains National Park	Rosie the Riveter Trust
Friends of Hawaii Volcanoes National Park	Santa Monica Mountains Fund
Friends of Independence National Historical Park	Sequoia Parks Conservancy
Friends of the Klondike Corridor	South Florida National Parks Trust
The Glacier Institute	Shenandoah National Park Association
Glacier National Park Conservancy	Theodore Roosevelt Nature and History Assoc.
Glen Canyon Natural History Association	Western National Parks Association



Golden Gate National Parks  
Conservancy

Grand Canyon Association

Grand Teton Association

Grand Teton National Park  
Foundation

Yellowstone Association

Yosemite Conservancy

Zion Natural History Association

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THE CORPS NETWORK,  
WASHINGTON, DC.

December 1, 2015

Hon. TOM MCCLINTOCK, *Chairman*,  
Hon. NIKI TSONGAS, *Ranking Member*,  
*House Subcommittee on Federal Lands*,  
*Washington, DC 20515*.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCCLINTOCK AND RANKING MEMBER TSONGAS:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony for the hearing record on Chairman Bishop's draft "National Park Service Centennial Act." On behalf of Service & Conservation Corps (Corps) around the country, we appreciate your efforts to strengthen the National Park Service (NPS) in anticipation of its centennial. This draft is a strong step for the NPS, its thousands of visitors, and partners like Corps that improve our parks and the visitor experience. We also greatly appreciate Ranking Member Grijalva's leadership in previously introducing the National Park Service Centennial Act, H.R. 3556 and the President's efforts in putting forward the draft NPS centennial legislation.

We particularly appreciate, and express our strong support, for inclusion of key provisions to strengthen Public Land Corps in Sec. 402 of the draft. Through the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993, Corps work with NPS to "perform, in a cost-effective manner, appropriate conservation projects on eligible service lands" and expose Corpsmembers "to public service while furthering their understanding and appreciation of the Nation's natural and cultural resources." Sec. 402 will allow us to significantly improve our Corps, and our work for NPS and the nation, by raising the allowable age of Corpsmembers to 30 from 25 which will allow us to engage more veterans and by extending the federal noncompetitive hiring status to ensure our Corpsmembers can efficiently move on to the next step in their careers.

The Corps Network is comprised of over 120 Corps that work in every state and engage over 20,000 youth and veterans (Corpsmembers) each year in our Corps model which involves conservation service projects in local communities or on public lands. Tied to those projects, Corpsmembers receive educational, workforce, and supportive services. Corps work in NPS units around the country in helping to make improvements to trails, infrastructure, manage and improve park ecosystems, and preserve historic structures. In addition we work with NPS' concessionaires on accomplishing projects for the parks and visitors. Modern-day Corps descended from the Civilian Conservation Corps and continue that legacy by developing the next generation of diverse conservation, recreation, and resource leaders.

Passage of this legislation along with additional investments in NPS and its partners like our Corps will ensure our nation's parks are ready for the next 100 years of providing "enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations." Thank you again for your leadership, and we look forward to working toward passage of a bipartisan National Park Service Centennial bill.

Sincerely,

MARY ELLEN SPRENKEL,  
CEO.

NATIONAL PARKS SECOND CENTURY ACTION COALITION,  
WASHINGTON, DC.

December 3, 2015

Hon. TOM MCCLINTOCK, *Chairman*,  
Hon. NIKI TSONGAS, *Ranking Member*,  
*House Committee on Natural Resources*,  
*Subcommittee on Federal Lands*,  
*Washington, DC 20515*.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCCLINTOCK, RANKING MEMBER TSONGAS, AND MEMBERS OF THE  
FEDERAL LANDS SUBCOMMITTEE:

Next year, Americans will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. We, the National Parks Second Century Action Coalition and other partners, write in strong support of efforts underway to prepare our national parks for a second century of service for current and future generations.

The National Parks Second Century Action Coalition is comprised of organizations supporting conservation, recreation, outdoor industry, travel and tourism and historic preservation that are dedicated to promoting the protection, restoration, and operation of the National Park System to benefit the health and well-being of current and future generations.

We applaud Natural Resources Committee Chairman Bishop for developing the discussion draft National Park Service Centennial Act, as well as Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Grijalva for introducing the administration's Centennial proposal (H.R. 3556). These bills demonstrate needed congressional interest in providing a significant commemoration of—and support for—the National Park Service Centennial. The bills provide needed funding for programs and maintenance through the Centennial Challenge Fund as well as a path toward improved long-term fiscal health with the establishment and investment of an endowment.

With an expected influx of visitors expected during and following the Centennial year, it would be a shame if families arrived to decaying facilities and too few rangers to greet them due to the current fiscal challenges facing national parks. On the eve of the National Park Service Centennial, our national parks are facing billions of dollars' worth of overdue repairs. Additionally, there has been more than a 7%, or \$178 million reduction in the account to operate national parks and more than a 12%, or \$370 million reduction in the total budget for the National Park Service over the last five years in today's dollars. These Centennial bills provide important support for helping relieve these significant funding shortfalls.

We support the provisions in the proposed legislation and H.R. 3556 that formally establish the Centennial Challenge Fund and an endowment to help address some of the financial needs of our nation's parks. We hope the committee will continue to investigate additional revenue sources to more robustly invest in the Centennial Challenge Fund and explore additional funding mechanisms for the National Park Service, while also more directly reducing the deferred maintenance backlog.

The Centennial Challenge is an innovative program that encourages private individuals, foundations, businesses and others to donate funds to help restore and improve our national parks by providing a federal match for the donations. Previous annual investments have supported valuable centennial projects throughout the country. If this bill were enacted, it would establish this program over three years, allowing partners additional time and certainty to raise the matching funds. The endowment would provide long term financial support for the national parks by investing monetary gifts and other contributions to be used in the future for projects and activities that support the national parks.

We also support provisions in the bills that recognize the importance of national parks as places of learning by enhancing interpretation and education programs, and by providing additional opportunities for volunteers in our nation's treasures. We also support the provisions that will help connect a new, diverse generation to the great outdoors and allow the National Park Service to recruit and hire more young and diverse Americans.

Passage of a bipartisan centennial bill, coupled with additional investments for national park roads in the transportation bill and operation and construction funding in the FY16 omnibus appropriations bill, can ensure our parks are better prepared to serve another hundred years and beyond.

Again, we thank Natural Resources Committee Chairman Bishop and Ranking Member Grijalva and their committee staff for offering a forum for discussion of strategies to keep America's national parks relevant and cherished and for offering specific steps to achieve these goals. We urge other members of the committee to support the effort and work with the Senate to swiftly move a final Centennial Bill toward passage.

Thank you for considering our views. We look forward to working with you to ensure final passage of a bipartisan National Park Service Centennial Bill.

Sincerely,

American Forests	National Park Hospitality Association
American Hiking Society	National Parks Conservation Association
American Recreation Coalition	National Tour Association
Appalachian Trail Conservancy	Recreational Equipment, Inc.
Association of Partners for Public Lands	Southeast Tourism Society
Destination Marketing Association International	Student Conservation Association
East Bay Regional Park District	The Coalition to Protect America's National Parks
Friends of Acadia	The Corps Network
Friends of the Oregon Caves and Chateau	The Wilderness Society
Grand Canyon Association	U.S. Travel Association
Japanese American Citizens League	United States Tour Operators Association
Mississippi River Fund	Western States Tourism Policy Council
Mount Rushmore Society	Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts
Nature Bridge	

